

NEGOTIATION FOR LEADERS (By Linda Swindling)

This chapter is designed to empower and equip leaders to:

ASK Outrageously and boldly request what they really want, instead of settling for what is offered.

Adopt negotiations as a proven method to strategically guide efforts to influence, persuade, and communicate powerfully.

Own their ability to DEAL Courageously and negotiate in every situation from big deals to workplace drama.

Are you a negotiator or a negoti-hater?

For some, the word “negotiation” brings forth visions of intense boardroom meetings, risky ventures, and manipulative tactics. There is a common concern that important information might be withheld or hidden. If you are not vigilant, you might miss the most significant element of a potential deal. Television shows and movies spotlight unethical wheeler dealers who use underhanded tricks to pressure others to comply against their will. Most sensible people would avoid those types of negative dealings.

Alternative Perspective

However, a negotiation does not always involve high-stakes conversations or an adversarial situation. Most people do not participate in dealmaking where one mistake risks your business or reputation. Instead, consider the definition found in Oxford’s Dictionary, “Negotiation refers to a discussion aimed at reaching an agreement.”

You have discussions all the time. In fact, leaders often are chosen based on the ability to have meaningful discussions and to reach agreements. In leadership, you could say that *everything* is a negotiation, and *nearly everything* can be negotiated.

The phrase reads “nearly everything” because your ethics and values are non-negotiable. Those ethics and values create trusting or reliable relationships with others. In negotiating, they are often your most valuable resource.

Leadership is a Series of Negotiations

You are negotiating all the time. Multiple, and sometimes hidden, negotiation moments exist in a leader’s role. Situations you experience daily are opportunities for discussions aimed at reaching agreements. Think of your leadership as a series of conversations aimed at reaching agreements with each party involved.

Good leaders and good negotiators ask many questions and listen to the answers. This chapter is filled with questions you can ask yourself and others. Use these questions and strategies to guide you on your negotiation journey, including when you face detours and road bumps.

Your Intention

A secret to a successful road trip is choosing a destination before mapping your route. Similarly, in negotiation, a good start to reaching your outcomes is identifying your destination or intention first. Once you determine your intention, consider naming your negotiation as you might for any project. Naming each deal attempt helps you to consider each opportunity more objectively. A name helps to mentally separate the deal from the requester, especially if your proposal is denied.

For example, you might name a request, “Funding for Quarter Three Management Program.” If the request for funding is rejected, the project was denied, not you as the person proposing the idea. Amateur negotiators take a “no” personally. Negotiating experts understand if you are not hearing “no” then you are not asking for enough.

Good negotiators prepare clear objectives and desired outcomes. To stay motivated, list your personal “why” or the good reasons you are seeking this agreement. Then, list the good reasons which are important to or might motivate the other side(s) to agree.

Knowing what you really want helps you stay focused and motivated. Defining your destination helps you stay on course and adjust if needed. Also, it helps prevent buyer’s remorse or questioning if you left something on the table. Most importantly, knowing your intended outcome reveals when you can stop negotiating to quit a bad deal or to celebrate the results of a good one.

ASK Outrageously!

Prepare to ask boldly. Do not settle for less until you explore the possibilities. Ask outside your comfort zone, even if you believe no one would grant the request. You will not shock the person you are asking. Surprisingly, people say, “yes” to bolder requests than yours.

What would you ask for if you knew you would get it? Here are some ideas:

- A fully funded program and budget to expand offerings
- More visibility and influence in executive decision-making
- Expanded resources for strategic talent development
- Securing engagement and participation with other departments
- A full implementation plan that includes leadership commitment
- Career advancement, a raise, promotion, or change in job title
- Addressing the needs of those on your team
- Asking for an executive coach or a mentor
- Requesting more for your career development

Negotiating for Yourself

How confident are you in negotiating with stakeholders? What is a frustrating moment in your career where you felt your influence was limited?

For instance, were you overlooked and not considered for a job or an opportunity? Have others ignored your recommendations or guidance? Maybe you felt unheard, undervalued, or experienced disrespect from peers and/or leaders. Perhaps an agreement was not upheld which changed the scope of a project or the effectiveness of a group. Maybe you asked in the past and were told, “no.”

Could this experience hold you back from negotiating for yourself? Other reasons you might hesitate include when you:

- Feel like my efforts are undervalued by decision-makers
- Fear pushback or rejection
- Don't believe there is budget available
- Perceive the present is not the right time
- Do not want to alienate or bother others.

You may be proficient at communication and dispute resolution skills. However, do you choose to play small when negotiating for your own personal and professional growth? When was the last time you actively advocated for yourself to acquire leadership roles, visibility, and professional development?

If you are not asking for yourself, you are not alone. During the research for *Ask Outrageously: The Secret to Getting What You Really Want*, sixty-five percent of the respondents from every industry agree. They would prefer to make a request for another rather than ask for themselves.

Stop Stopping Yourself

At times, the toughest person to convince maybe you. Here are a few suggestions to quit stopping your efforts and make a request that benefits you.

Don't Hesitate. Go Negotiate. Do not wait and watch your desire go to another. In the research for the book *Ask Outrageously! The Secret to Getting What You Really Want*, one-third of the respondents reported that they failed to ask for an opportunity and it was granted to another.

Your worst-case scenario is not hearing “no.” It is worse to not know a potential outcome because you failed to make a request. When the response is “no”, the other party now *knows* of your interest. Even when initial requests are denied, they often are granted later and may be better suited to your real interests.

Risk a “Yes.” Reflect on your history. Have you ever wanted to be considered for a job, a study abroad program, attend a training program, work on a project, and/or have a date to the prom? However, you didn’t ask? Nothing is worse than sharing your failed attempt later, and hearing, “Wow. I wish you had asked. My answer would have been ‘yes.’”

Quit Reliving Past Mistakes. While you can find lessons from previous attempts, there is no need to continue to play multiple mental reruns of unfavorable negotiations. Overanalyzing past deals, prevents you from being present for new opportunities.

Give yourself a break. Stop worrying if you could have created a better deal with additional time and preparation. Smart negotiators know that additional time allows others to prepare and improve their positions as well. Make the best deal you can, with the facts you have, and move on.

Know your BATNA: According to *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In* by Roger Fisher and William Ury, BATNA stands for your Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement. Basically, what is your next best option if this deal does not work? You gain power through identifying what other opportunities are available to you and to the other parties involved.

Be a SMART ASK!

In goalsetting, SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time Bound.

The SMART ASK in negotiations applies to a similar strategy and clearly signals what you really want. Try the SMART approach when making requests. Also, use the SMART approach to clarify or to gain more information about requests posed to you.

Specific - What specifically are you requesting? Don’t make people guess what you want. Or if you are receiving the request, what specifically are you being asked to consider?

Measurable – How will you know that you are successful? What will the other person use to judge success? And what criteria or evidence will be used to track progress?

Achievable – How is this request realistic or attainable? What authority or ability does the person you are approaching possess to act on the request?

Relevant – How does the request relate to or align with a broader objective? How is the request on point for meeting a need or solving a challenge?

Time Bound – What is the deadline or timeframe involved?

The word ASK is an acronym to help you determine which question is best to ask in your current situation. ASK stands for Aware, Seek, Know.

Aware

Identifying Stakeholders

Recognize potential stakeholders to prepare to negotiate effectively. Ask questions like:

Who might be involved in this negotiation? What frequency do you interact with the different stakeholders? For instance, who is generally involved? Which stakeholders change depending on the occasion? Who should be considered or approached for future deals?

What role does each stakeholder hold? For example, how often do you deal with the following?

Internal Clients

External Clients

Peers

My Leaders/Boss

Members on My Team

Other Departments for Resources

Accounting/Procurement

Partners Outside our Organization

Vendors

Now, consider what type of authority, if any, is needed for them to approve an agreement? How do they influence decisions? What type of veto power do they have? Who was not mentioned on this list that you interact with regularly? What can you determine about them or their potential interests before your next negotiation?

Aware of Their Demeanor

When negotiating, observe each party's voice tone, word choice, body posture, and attitude. How does the person you are asking appear or sound? Does this person seem at ease and ready to listen? Does this person's body language show someone who is leaning forward and making eye contact or does that person seem stressed, busy and focused on other matters? If there appears to be a disconnect, you may want to start with the question, "Is this still a good time to have our discussion or would you prefer to reschedule?"

If someone is making a request to you, be aware of the actual words used and how the request is delivered. When responding, what is your demeanor? What message is your voice tone, word choice, body posture and/or attitude conveying?

How do you know if they are telling you the truth?

You may be able to spot clues of true feelings, including stressors, through a change in body position or tone. Watch to see if you can observe similar movements or changes during the same line of questioning. To confirm your suspicions or gain more insight, ask a neutral question to compare their demeanor. Or ask for their opinion with questions, “How does this approach sound?” or “I’ve been speaking quite a while, what are your thoughts?”

However, never assume you can read people’s intentions purely by their physical movement. Even the most experienced body language experts state that it is impossible to know what others are truly thinking.

Stay Cool, Calm, and in Control

Aware questions serve another role. You can ask them to regain control in unexpected, difficult, and stressful situations. Aware questions are helpful in responding to unexpected demands, requests, or unpleasant situations. They help you stay calm instead of becoming alarmed or defensive.

If you are feeling uncertain or stressed, use these quick strategies for awareness to ground yourself before reacting.

1. Channel an investigative reporter. Ask the other person to repeat their last statement and provide you with an example or definition to ensure the words are understood. What questions would a curious reporter ask to gain a full perspective or balanced view of this situation?
2. Perform an internal inventory. Your body gives clues about your emotions. Tune into your breathing or heart rate. Explore your physical response to this perceived stress. Take a moment to locate where you might be experiencing tightness or pain. Start counting your breaths and inhale deeper to slow down erratic breathing. Shrug your shoulders and let go of the tension in your shoulders, your back or neck.
3. Take a pause to process a request to regain composure. Ask for a short recess to investigate the other party’s issues. Or request a few moments to grab a drink or take a restroom break. The few moments you take to regain control will not be noticed, and taking a short pause can lead to a better result.

Seek

Use questions to seek information, obtain clarification, or gather evidence to prove your assumption is correct. Most leaders know the power of open-ended questions. These unrestricted questions encourage discussion, are non-judgmental, and promote discussion instead of guarding against attacks.

Information you might seek includes:

- What are the individual interests of each person involved? How could you help them obtain those interests?
- How important is an agreement to them?
- What would be a win or desired outcome for them?
- How might they face approval challenges?
- What options are available to them?
- How do they make their decisions?
- What data or evidence would they believe or wish to review?
- What objections might they have? What's the plan to address those objections?
- How do they best like to communicate and at what frequency?
- What are their options or alternatives if your deal does not reach an agreement?
- What is their worst-case scenario?

And to make a deal more durable, consider:

- What/who could we also include that would benefit and participate?
- What could you offer that may not cost you much, but they would value?
- What motivates each of the parties involved?

Despite the excellent scripts available, perfect phrases rarely are recalled in an actual negotiation or dealing with an uncomfortable setting. When seeking clarification or more information, ask questions beginning with those two magical words, “What?” and “How?”

- How do you wish to proceed?
- What would make a significant difference?
- How is this experience like another you have faced?
- What are the good reasons you decided on one solution instead of another?
- What do you think is the real problem?
- How big of a problem is this really?
- What is a real solution that all can adopt?
- What happens if you do nothing?

Seek Their Meaning

It is tempting to learn about a situation and then skip to problem solving. However, you miss the opportunity to understand all the parties involved and their interests. Failing to seek can undermine a negotiation by ignoring interests, solving the wrong problems or creating additional issues to be negotiated later.

In the same way, do not assume your meaning of a word or understanding of a situation is shared. Definitions and understanding of words are different. You may hear words, phrases, or ideas that do not match the terminology or best practices you know. To ensure you are on the same page, use these questions to seek clarity.

1. Repeat the exact words shared without adding emotion. Then ask,
“How close is what I just said to what you shared?”

“What am I missing?” or “What would you change?”

2. For further clarity, ask open-ended questions for example:

“How would you describe the meaning of the word ____?”

“What would be an example of that behavior?” or “What else?”

If you can maintain eye contact, take notes to capture their exact wording. Notetaking helps you stay objective, gives you words for later reflection, and decreases the personal effect those comments may have on you during the moment. NOTE: If asked why you are taking notes, reply, “Your comments are important to me. I want to make sure I get them down correctly before responding.”

Remember, if people are emotional, hurting, or frustrated, they may not choose the proper terms or present ideas in a logical format. In a potentially stressful or negative conversation, be prepared to spend more time seeking to understand the information shared. NOTE: If you feel threatened or safety becomes a concern, state that you need a break and leave. Your safety outweighs anyone’s desire to be heard.

Know

The best negotiators prepare with the information available and know they cannot ascertain everyone’s perspective or interests. They remain open to possibilities and issues which arise. As new data or insights develop, they choose their next best step or question. Your plan will change as you negotiate. Prepare, then concentrate on the conversation. If you cannot determine what action to take next, ask more questions to seek clarity.

Successful deals, including the most complex negotiations, involve four elements. There are decisions to be made, people and parties with whom to engage, needs and interests to accommodate, and resources and potential strengths to be leveraged. These styles make up the acronym DEAL.

Decide

Engage

Accommodate

Leverage

What's Your Deal?

In addition to your upbringing, education, and experience, you may prefer one or two DEAL elements. As a leader, you may have experience with assessments regarding communication or personal strengths. Assessments can help identify your unique blend of motivators and approaches to problem solving, risk taking, analyzing information, communicating, and creating relationships.

Your nurturing, experiences, training, and preferences reflect your DEAL style or how you uniquely approach and manage a negotiation. For instance,

Do you prefer to make decisions from a few choices, reach a negotiated agreement which permits reasonable changes as conditions are encountered, and begin work?

If so, you may possess the traits of a *Decider*.

Or

Would you rather review the resources you possess, evaluate the elements of the other side's position, consider all your options, and create the right arrangement to avoid revisiting details and unstructured conclusions?

Then, perhaps you best relate to characteristics of a *Leverager*.

Or

Would you prefer to meet one-on-one with each party to determine the true concerns and aspirations of each, and understand how a deal will affect all those involved?

Maybe you have the strengths of an *Accommodator*.

Or

Do you want to explore creative suggestions, gain insights from all participants, attempt to reach consensus, and obtain buy-in from all the stakeholders?

If yes, you might possess the gifts of an *Engager*.

Which behaviors are most natural for you? Were you shown how to negotiate using a different approach? If so, you may observe yourself moving from one style to the next. Which approaches, if any, can drain your energy?

Whether your preferred DEAL style is innate or learned, knowing how you prefer to negotiate helps you play to your strengths and/or can signal where you may rely too much on one approach.

What's Their DEAL?

DEAL styles also provide a framework for understanding different negotiation preferences of stakeholders. Here are considerations to communicate and negotiate with others.

Deciders

These negotiators are extroverted, task-oriented, and assertive. When making requests, remember not to chit chat or waste their time. Ask them about the bottom line. They like debate and making sure the solution is the best, so politely challenge their thinking. Give them a few choices and allow them to decide.

Engagers

These negotiators are bold, intuitive, and relationship oriented. They are typically good communicators. In negotiating, connect before giving details or facts. Ask for their input and creative ideas. If sold on your proposal, they will help you communicate and engage others. However, place the responsibility on following up or implementing on yourself.

Accommodators

As negotiators, they are reserved, sensing, feelers who make others feel comfortable. When negotiating, remember to relate to people before profits. Ask them for insights into others' personalities and for the best ways to connect. Be considerate and inclusive. Do not leave them out of communication.

Leveragers

These negotiators are introverted, serious thinkers who are task oriented. When negotiating, remember they are more concerned with efficiency over engaging. Ask them about their process, attempts and best practices before suggesting others. Allow them the time to think. They are natural skeptics and will need details and evidence to conduct their own investigation before agreeing to any plan.

Learning each stakeholder's preferred DEAL style enhances a leader's ability to negotiate professionally and personally. Knowing "What's Their DEAL" helps form stronger teams, cross-departmental collaboration, boost your influence, and advance your career growth.

NOTE: When faced with a complex negotiation consisting of several stakeholders, avoid thinking of the deal making as one large event with one entity. Wherever possible, separate each stakeholder and determine how to DEAL with each person.

Reminder: One size or DEAL approach does not suit all negotiators. Though most have preferences, everyone has a mixture of all these styles.

Real DEAL

Change your DEAL approach to others when you get stuck. Dealmakers may begin with strategies they learned from a leader, a negotiation training, or a book. However, those tactics might not align with their real interests. When they stop responding to one approach or you find yourself at a stalemate, try a different DEAL Style.

Raw DEAL Behavior

Under stress, negotiators will often employ a negative version of their DEAL behavior to get their needs met. For example, Deciders can become Controllers to get a deal done. Engagers may become Prima Dons/Donnas to receive attention. Accommodators can withdraw and be observed as Whiners to fill a relationship need. To gain a sense of control, Leverages negatively use their abilities to maintain status quo by preventing change. They can become Complicators who become naysayers and micro managers.

Misunderstandings are common regarding varying negotiation styles. However, issues can also arise when another reminds you of a negative negotiator with similar traits, when another's strength is your dormant style, and among those with the same DEAL styles.

Other Adjustments

Authentic attempts to understand and adapt to others' preferences help you connect, enhance trust, and uncover interests more quickly. Dealing with multiple stakeholders also requires heightened awareness, flexibility, and intentional relationship-building to foster successful outcomes.

These adjustments involve more than DEAL Styles. Challenges may arise in multicultural negotiations occurring across a variety of time zones. You may face delays, communication barriers, differing cultural norms, and misaligned expectations. There can be power dynamics, especially regarding interpretations of priorities, implementation, responsibilities, and hierarchy.

DEAL Also Spells LEAD

A leader's role can be challenging and involves much more than meeting goals and making decisions. Your job also includes developing others. Do your employees and leaders have the

negotiation skills they need to thrive in today's workplace? Negotiation is a critical component of leadership and organizational success.

Often leadership sees negotiation as an isolated skill. However, negotiation techniques can be integrated to provide your team with a new way of dealing with others in nearly every aspect of their jobs. Enhancing negotiation skills also improves abilities in influence, dispute resolution, change management, strategic thinking, and interpersonal relationships. And, once your team members are equipped and empowered to negotiate, they can share part of the load of responsibilities you face as a leader.

How could you frame negotiation coaching or training as a critical factor in leadership, teamwork, and organizational success? You may have to negotiate to get the negotiation skills your team members need.

Practice does not make perfect. No negotiator or negotiation is perfect.

However, negotiation practice is essential. If you want more confidence in the big deals, start with small requests. Ask Outrageously or outside your comfort zone every day. For instance, request help locating an item in a store, ask that an expired coupon be honored, request a discount, talk to strangers in a line, go to yard sales, and haggle at flea markets.

Making requests in low-risk situations strengthens your ability to deal with uncertainty, embrace discomfort, and regain control when the stakes are high. Feel the fear and risk hearing "no" and ask for a deal anyway. Regular practice sharpens your awareness of motives, communication styles, understand others' reactions, and survive the word "no."

Over time, you discover there is not much difference between bargaining at a garage sale, asking for a raise, or negotiating a multi-million-dollar agreement. The emotions, adrenaline, and inability to predict the result are the same. The primary distinction between big deals and smaller requests are the stakeholders, time involved, the outcome's personal impact on you, and the number of zeros involved.

Through practice, you will make better requests, improve your influence, elevate your leadership skills and unlock better - sometimes outrageously good - outcomes.

Be a SMART ASK! ASK Outrageously! DEAL Courageously! Go Negotiate!

Suggestions

If you want to learn more about negotiation and/or receive bonus resources, go to the website: www.LindaSwindling.com/ATD. There you will find the tools and assessments to help you complete the three negotiation challenges below. Or, if you already feel comfortable negotiating, consider guiding a negoti-hater, such as a team member or someone you care about, through these activities.

1. Take a moment and think about what you would ask if you were brave, then complete the negotiations preparation form to prepare for your next negotiation.
2. Take the free assessments How Well Do You Ask? What's Your DEAL Style, What's Their DEAL Style. Use the code "DEAL." There are resources to help you apply the results from the assessments including videos, articles, and communication strategies.
3. Take the SMART ASK Challenge. You have 48 hours to make a request outside your comfort zone and report the results.

Negotiation for Leaders Reference Tool: Conversation Strategies for **DEAL** Preference

DEAL Preference	Neutral Traits	Development Areas	Related Communication Styles
DECIDE When asking remember to: • No chit chat, don't waste time • Ask about the bottom-line, politely challenge thinking, give a few choices, let them decide When stressed, see Controllers	• Extroverted Assertive Serious • Intuitive Thinkers • Task-oriented	<i>Improve asking & coping skills through:</i> • Communication, patience, sensitivity, trusting others <i>Enhance natural strengths in:</i> • Negotiations, influence, risk taking, decision making	• Choleric /Hippocrates • Commander/CORE MAP • ENT/Myers-Briggs • Director/Dominance/DISC • Knower/BrainStyles • Red/Personal Insight Inventory • Red/Lumina Spark
ENGAGE When asking remember to: • Connect before details/facts • Ask for input and creative ideas, will help communicate & engage others, you must follow up When stressed, see Prima Donnas/Dons	• Extroverted • Bold Casual Intuitive Feeling • Relationship-oriented	<i>Improve asking & coping skills through:</i> • Impulse control, planning, internal validation <i>Enhance natural strengths in:</i> • Networking, public speaking, multitasking, creativity	• Sanguine/Hippocrates • Entertainer/CORE MAP • ENF/Myers-Briggs • Inducement/Influence/DISC • Conceptor/BrainStyles • Yellow/Personal Insight Inventory • Yellow/Lumina Spark
ACCOMMODATE When asking remember to: • Relate to people before profit • Ask for insights into best ways to connect and personality. • Be considerate and inclusive. When stressed, see Whiners	• Introverted Reserved Casual • Sensing Feelers • Relationship-oriented	<i>Improve asking & coping skills through:</i> • Assertiveness, self-care, independent decision making <i>Enhance natural strengths in:</i> • Mediation, team building, conflict resolution, listening	• Phlegmatic/Hippocrates • Relater/CORE MAP • ISF/Myers-Briggs • Sensors/Supportiveness/DISC • Conciliator/BrainStyles • Blue/Personal Insight Inventory • Green/Lumina Spark
LEVERAGE When asking remember to: • Efficiency over engagement. • Ask about process, attempts, best practices. Allow time to reflect. • Need details & evidence. When stressed, see Complicators	• Introverted Reserved Serious • Sensing Thinkers • Task-oriented	<i>Improve asking & coping skills through:</i> • Relaxation, flexibility, letting go of perfectionism, emotional intelligence <i>Enhance natural strengths in:</i> • Planning, strategy, project management, organization	• Melancholy/Hippocrates • Organizer/CORE MAP • IST/Myers-Briggs • Compliance/ Conscientiousness/DISC • Deliberator/BrainStyles • Green/Personal Insight Inventory • Blue/Lumina Spark

DEAL preference styles correlate with commonly recognized preferences in communication. Although each style does not map precisely, these instruments have related resources which may help you to identify, communicate, and negotiate better with other DEAL styles.