

High Value Questions in Negotiations....Invaluable.

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“Curiosity is the basis of education and if you tell me curiosity killed the cat, I say only the cat died nobly”- Arnold Edinborough

Curiosity in negotiations saves money. It’s as simple as that, so be the cat!

The way we channel our negotiation curiosity is to ask “High Value Questions”. High Value Questions are questions that cannot be answered with a “yes” or a “no”.

Examples of High Value Questions on negotiation training are as follows;

- 1) When and Why was negotiation training introduced to your team?
- 2) What was the big difference in your team after negotiation training?
- 3) Where do you think you will gain the most from negotiation training?
- 4) Who on your team needs negotiation training?
- 5) How much revenue is your company hoping to capture with negotiation training?

The person who curiously enquired with the above High Value Questions would certainly have gained a lot of information on;

- 1) Timing
- 2) Corporate Culture
- 3) Response Expectations
- 4) Goals
- 5) Personnel
- 6) Budget information

High Value Questions sometimes called “open ended” questions are essential to collecting the kind of information from the other side that allows us to avoid making assumptions and costly mistakes in negotiations.

To put this in context, if a business negotiation were a military exercise can you imagine leading a team on to the battle field without having asked piercing questions to build reconnaissance on the opposing side? Not likely!

An astute negotiator will have a list of High Value Questions in her pocket before she enters every client negotiation meeting. These High Value Questions will be ranked by importance of revenue or objectives.

If the High Value Questions are delivered in a non threatening manner and the other side starts to answer at length four important things should happen.

- 1) The person on our team that asked the questions should then assume the role of interviewer and gently encourage the other side to continue with their line of response so the interviewer can ask deeper questions.
- 2) If our side is on a four legged call with the client, the person not asking questions should be taking detailed notes.
- 3) After the meeting these notes are then dissected and matched against our ranked list of High Value Questions and objectives.
- 4) Finally, a new set of High Value Questions is created for the next meeting in the negotiation.

The outcome of the meeting may not be as important as the information gathered through well conceived High Value Questions.

High Value Questions in Negotiations?Invaluable!

Centroid believes “Curiosity was framed. Ignorance killed the cat”!