

Negotiation Strategy..... Is one enough?

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Most of us learned to negotiate while growing up by imitating siblings, classmates and even parents. We watched others get what they wanted by pushing the “buttons” of those they were engaging in a predetermined sequence at just the right time. It was bubblegum generals planning kid warfare.

Over time we develop a series of “go to” bargaining strategies that define us. As parents we often use the “Good Cop/Bad Cop” to keep our offspring in check, that is until our children figure out that the Good Cop is too good and the Bad Cop is just an old softie. Children know that just one well placed tear running down a cheek gets them everything they ever wanted and leaves the parents scrabbling to determine which one of them caved in.

The same thing happens in business negotiations. The only difference is, it’s not about bubblegum or a video game haggling it’s about a contract or deal that could be worth thousands or even millions of dollars.

As a professional in a negotiation it is our job to pull the other side toward our list of objectives and get agreement on our needs while listening to the other side and making them feel fulfilled monetarily or emotionally by the outcome of the deal.

One negotiating strategy on its own might get a deal done if your opponent has not seen the strategy before or has not bargained with you before. The problem is that after we engage someone a few times we start to predict bargaining outcomes and look for “tells” (Poker term for Personal Quirks) from the other side that tips us the negotiation strategy the other side is using is in play. I remember a contemporary who smiled inappropriately when they would get nervous. They couldn’t control it. Watch your “tells”!

Centroid Negotiations has identified 15 different Negotiation Strategies one could encounter in a negotiation.

Professional Negotiators have several tried, true and tested strategies that they mix and match to their opponents styles to get the best results. To put it another way “Pros” scope out the playing field and approach each bargaining exercise with a negotiation strategy and a series back up plans.

They realize that all deals have individual personalities that require interpretation depending on the Needs, Costs, Timing and Style associated with the other side.

Centroid with its negotiation experience has placed risk markers for Buyers and Sellers on 15 Negotiation Strategies. Secondly, we've topped up this Buyer/Seller relationship with a Time Compression risk marker for each strategy.

By selecting pieces of up to 15 different strategies for a negotiation it is possible to keep "them" off balance giving us maximum opportunity to reduce our negative risk while taking more positive risks to achieve a smart deal while maintaining our relationship with "them".

Before entering into any important deals or contracts where Negotiation Strategy is required ask yourself... "Is one enough"?