

Negotiation Strategy Planner

1 WANTS & NEEDS

What are your wants and needs?
What are your counterpart's wants and needs?
What wants and needs do you have in common?

2 OPTIONS & CONCESSIONS

What options do you have ready?
What concessions would you consider?
What's your bottom line?
What's your best alternative if you can't reach an agreement?

3 YOUR COUNTERPART

What forms of evidence are needed to convince them? How do they make decisions? Why might they reject your proposal? What are some reactions you can prepare for? What does counterpart need to get buy-in from others?

4 COMMUNICATION

What do you want to achieve in the 1st meeting?
What key messages do you want to send? How will you open the conversation? What questions will you ask to get the info you need? What are different ways this conversation could play out?

5 SOLUTIONS

How would your proposal benefit your counterpart?
What solutions might your counterpart suggest? Which is the best solution that could satisfy both parties?
What are the consequences if no action is taken?

6 COMMITMENTS

What level of commitment do you want?
What are the action steps? What's the timeline?
How will success be measured?
How will you hold each other accountable?

Negotiation Strategies

Tip Sheet

Mindset

- Know your value to the organization. Be clear about what you can do for the other side better than anyone else. Make your value visible.
- The biggest mistake women make is not to ask/negotiate. One reason: women are often overly concerned about how they will be perceived.
- Many women want to be liked, and care about what others think of them. They place more emphasis on saving the relationship than men do, and this can be an obstacle for achieving their goals.

Preparation

- Be yourself, but remember, you are playing a part.
- Set the opening offer to establish your position right from the start. Give details to justify your position.
- Have a few concessions ready. Clarify what you are sacrificing, but don't give away too much (make the concession sound bigger than it really is.)
- Come up with 2-3 options for each of your needs and wants. Know what you need to get, but be flexible on how to get there.
- Aim to avoid making ultimatums. This is an aggressive tactic that can back others into a corner.
- Your goal is to convince others it's in their best interest to accept your proposal. Always highlight how they will benefit.
- Identify "standards", common practices or precedents in your profession that assess the fairness of your wants and needs.
- Prepare for tactics that are designed to put you on the defensive. These include challenging your competence or expertise, demeaning your ideas ("You can't be serious"), making threats, criticizing your style (hypersensitive, irrational, overly emotional, etc.) appealing for sympathy or using flattery ("I know you won't let me down"), time pressure and giving ultimatums
- PRACTICE. Role-play your negotiating conversation with a trusted colleague or family member. Include a role reversal where you play the counterpart, and your colleague plays you. This can lead to some interesting revelations. Video record the role-play with your smartphone. Replay, review and evaluate.

In the Room

- To project confidence, speak with a strong voice, maintain steady eye contact, use open body posture and forceful gestures, avoid up-speak (statements that sound like questions), be concise and speak up early to establish your presence. Don't rush, fidget, use excessive filler words (*um, ah, etc.*), apologize, or divulge too much. Avoid verbal disclaimers such as *I may be wrong, but...or I'm not the expert on this, but...*

(continued)

Negotiation Strategies

Tip Sheet (continued)

- Listen before proposing solutions. The more your counterpart feels listened to, the more he/she will be open to your ideas.
- Minimize the effort required on their part. Let them know what you *don't* need them to do. "I can live without X, but I really need Y." Tell them what *you* can do. "I can take care of X, so all I need from you is Y."
- To strike the right balance, be friendly and forceful.
- If you encounter strong resistance, don't keep pushing. Let it go for a while and then come back to it a bit later. This will help you avoid being seen as overly aggressive.
- Ask "why" questions to better understand your counterpart's perspective, underlying interests and goals.
- Find a connection between their goals and yours. Where can you find common ground?
- Try not to take things personally. Always focus on the issue, not the person.
- To determine how important an issue is to the other side, see if you can get them to rank the importance. *On a scale of 1-10, how important is X to you?*
- Periodically paraphrase and summarize. The more your counterpart feels listened to, the more they will be open to your ideas.
- Point out the negative consequences if no action is taken.
- When ending the negotiation, be sure to secure commitment, not just agreement, and establish accountability to each other.

After

- Debrief directly after the conversation. What worked well? What would you consider doing differently next time? Where did you get stuck in the negotiation and why? How did you work your way out of it? What did your counterpart say or do that you could learn from?

Remember:

What most people want from a negotiation is to leave feeling that they were treated fairly and that they could defend the outcome to stakeholders.

Helpful Phrases for Negotiations

Opening the Conversation

1. *There's something I'd like to discuss with you that I think will help us achieve a common goal.*
2. *I'd like to talk about your recent offer. I think we may have different ideas on what is fair.*
3. *I'd like to see if we can reach a better understanding about X. Tell me your thoughts on this and then I'll share my perspective as well.*

In the Conversation

1. *Let's brainstorm some potential solutions. What are your ideas? What would you like to see happen?*
2. *I'd like to give my reaction to what you've said so far and then see where we can go from there.*
3. *Help me understand. What are you seeing that I'm not seeing? OK, now let me show you what I'm seeing that you may not be seeing. Then let's talk about how we can work together to find a solution.*
4. *What's wrong with what I'm proposing? What part of this will work for you?*
5. *I hear your objection. If you were in my position, what would you think is a reasonable expectation for..."*
6. *Given where we are now, I understand what I'm asking for may be hard for you to do. However, if we put our heads together, I'm confident we can come up with a solution that works for both of us.*
7. *Let's take a step back and see where you and I agree and disagree so we can start to work something out.*
8. *Let me show you how what I'm proposing can meet your needs as well as mine.*
9. *I appreciate your ideas, but I'm finding it hard to hear them, because I feel you're not respecting my ideas. Let's take a step back to consider your views as well as mine.*
10. *I'm surprised by your reaction. Tell me more about why you feel so strongly about this.*
11. *This conversation is getting intense, and we don't want it to turn into an argument. Let's take a moment to collect our thoughts.*
12. *Help me understand why your proposal might be fair.*
13. *I don't fully understand your point of view. Here are the reasons I'm hearing you say this won't work. What am I missing here?*
14. *What can I do to make you confident that I'm ready for this new role?*
15. *I'm surprised to hear you say what I'm proposing is unreasonable. You and I both know what I'm asking for is in line with what others are already getting.*

Wrapping Up

1. *It's unfortunate that our conversation has taken this turn. I need some time to think through how we might resolve this. I suggest we regroup tomorrow.*
2. *I know this conversation has been difficult and I hope nothing I've said has offended you. But, like you, I have been direct and truthful.*
3. *So, for next steps, you are going to (recap). And I will (recap). Are we in agreement? How about we schedule a follow-up meeting to track our progress on this?*

Managing Difficult Conversations

Tip Sheet

1. Consider splitting the conversation into two parts. Use the first meeting to raise awareness of the key issues and hear perspectives of both sides. Use the second meeting for the discussion itself. Handling the situation incrementally allows time for both sides to think things through and have a more productive discussion.
2. When things start to get heated, try not to take it personally. Always focus on the issue, not the person. If the person is disrespectful you can say, "I'm not going to respond to you if you speak that way." Manage emotions. If your counterpart becomes angry, don't get caught up in his/her emotions. Stay calm and try to defuse the tension. Take a break if necessary.
3. As soon as you realize the conversation is escalating into a heated debate, stop and politely ask them if they are interested in a conversation or a debate. You can then say, "I'd love to have a conversation with you, but if you want a heated debate where one of us wins, and one loses, I'm going to pass."
4. Minimize direct confrontation and accusatory language by using "I-messages" instead of "you-messages. For example, "I feel we're getting sidetracked again." vs. "You're getting off track again."
5. Identify tactics your counterpart is using to help neutralize them. Often you can disarm others by naming the tactic during the conversation. For example, "You're not letting me have my turn to speak" or "It feels like you're trying to intimidate me. This is not fair, and I will not engage further if it continues."
6. To preempt interruptions, keep talking and raise your voice slightly to finish your point. You can also say, "Jerry, I'm not finished yet", "Marc, just 10 more seconds", "Ritesh, hang on."
7. Think about what signals you are sending during the conversation. Be cognizant of your facial expressions, voice intonation, and body language. Rolling your eyes, shaking your head, and crossing your arms can negatively impact the interaction. Planning your rebuttal instead of demonstrating active listening is also counterproductive.
8. Stay on track. If the other person tries to deflect, deny or change the subject, refocus on the goal.
9. If someone dismisses your idea, engage them in the conversation: "Larry, tell me what you're thinking." Call out the behavior: "Ron, that sounds dismissive."
10. When providing constructive feedback to a colleague, consider the Situation, Behavior, Impact (SBI) model. 1. Describe the Situation: where and when the issue occurred. 2. Describe the Behavior: what you saw or heard. 3. Discuss the Impact: the result or outcome. 4. End with Actions/Next steps: offer a recommendation for how to change the negative behavior. For example: "I'd like to talk to you about this morning's meeting. I noticed a pattern I'd like to discuss with you. I'm sure this wasn't your intention, but I felt you were talking down to me when I asked you a question about the project. When you oversimplify issues like that, it makes me feel you think that I'm not knowledgeable on the topic. Moving forward, you can safely assume I do have a higher level of understanding on this."

Role-Plays

Scenario 1: Proposing New System for Checking in Patients

Participants: Physician and 2 Staffers

You have created a new system of checking in patients to improve workflow (approved by your colleagues.) Your proposed changes reduce paperwork, streamline the check-in process, and would help office staff work more efficiently. However, they are resistant because it's been done the same way for years before you joined. Two staffers, who you value and respect, are the most resistant to change. You have arranged a meeting to discuss the situation.

Scenario 2: Colleagues Not Pulling Their Weight When Covering a Clinic

Participants: Physician and 2 Colleagues

You have been staying late to cover other colleagues on multiple occasions and haven't had time to attend to personal needs. Going to the gym, spending time with family, and important social activities have all been sidelined. While some colleagues remain diligent on the project, others are not. Certain individuals always leave early, and you wind up doing the bulk of the work. You want to create a system so "staying late" is evenly distributed/scheduled, and everyone knows they will be able to leave on time at least one day a week. You have decided to approach colleagues to discuss a more equitable arrangement.

Scenario 3 Negotiating for More Than a Title Change

Participants: Physician and Supervisor

You were surprised to discover that a male colleague with relatively little experience in a particular area has met privately with a key supervisor to recommend a new position for himself. Ironically, you have extensive experience and a proven track record in this area, and you are the one who really deserves this role. You have decided to meet with the supervisor to make your case. In the meeting, the supervisor cites COVID-related budgetary constraints, and offers you a prestigious title change, but not the responsibilities you were seeking and no additional compensation. He says the title will position you for greater things in the future, however, you realize this really means a lot more work and effort on your part without any pay increase. You need to negotiate better terms.

Observer Sheet

Consider how well you and others do on the items below & highlight areas for improvement.

1 Personal Presentation

Comments

Voice Tone: friendly, calm
Pace: deliberate, not rushed, uses pauses well
Facial Expression: responsive
Eye Contact: steady, focused
Posture & Gestures: open, relaxed, no distractions

2 Framing Discussion

Clearly stated purpose and desired outcome
Got to the point quickly
Set a collaborative tone

3 Listening & Questioning

Listened attentively, didn't interrupt
Paraphrased, acknowledged other viewpoints
Asked open-ended questions to gain a deeper understanding

4 Composure

Kept emotions in check
Handled negative reactions & pushback well
Avoided accusations, blaming, passing judgement
Was able to de-escalate tension

5 Problem Solving

Identified roadblocks
Found common ground
Considered multiple solutions
Gained agreement on best way forward

6 Meeting Management

Kept discussion on track
Maintained ownership of the meeting
Managed meeting time effectively
Clarified action items, responsibilities, due dates

Tackling Hostility & Conflict Management: Negotiation & Confrontation Skills

4 Options to Address Conflict

1. Do Nothing

Use when...

- You don't have energy or time
- You think other person is unwilling to engage
- You have little or no power
- The issue isn't that important

2. Address Indirectly

Use when...

- Your culture values saving face
- Confrontation is not appropriate in your work environment
- Counterpart would be more open to feedback from someone else

3. Address Directly

Use when...

- Resentment may build up if you don't address issue
- You want to repair relationship
- Indirect options have failed and problem persists

4. Exit

Use when...

- Issue can't be resolved thru current conversation
- Counterpart was never willing to acknowledge the situation
- Situation is getting overly heated

Personal Action Plan

What feedback did you get that was new or different?

What did you learn about your strengths and development areas?

What specifically will you do to prepare for a negotiation?

What will you say or do to increase your chances of getting buy-in if you encounter resistance?

What actions will you take to promote yourself and make your value visible?

What will you do in the next 3-5 days to start implementing your plan? Who can you reach out to for ongoing feedback to support your success?
