**NEGOTIATING STYLES AND PATTERNS**

**Negotiating Styles**

1. COMPETITORS - Favored outcome: "I win, you lose." Highly competitive, focus on winning, usually at any cost. Often put winning in personal terms, i.e. they want to beat *you.* Typically pay close attention to whether they get a better deal than someone else. Unconcerned about being fair. Winning (and not getting a worse deal than someone else) is everything. Often see negotiating as a game and enjoy the process as long as they think they can win.
2. ACCOMMODATORS - Favored outcome: "I lose, you win." They want to maximize the other side's gain. They want everyone to think they are fair at any cost to them. They want to get the best deal for the other side. Often sales service people are accommodators. Keep accommodators away from business negotiations.
3. CONFLICT AVOIDERS – Can’t deal with conflict or confrontations. Rarely seen in business negotiations, but if they do show up, they usually turn into accommodators – keep them away from negotiations.
4. COOPERATORS - Favored outcome: "I win, you win." They try to maximize joint gain, build trust, and enhance relation­ships. They are concerned about being fair. They want to increase the size of the pie, not get the largest slice.
5. PROBLEM SOLVERS – This style is the hardest. It seeks to discover the underlying problems through candid disclosure of interests and find the most elegant solution by brainstorming many options, and resolve tough issues using fair standards of division. The problem-solving style is especially useful in complex negotiations. It is not practical when time is short or when the other side is competitive and intent on playing hardball.

The four types can be folded into two basic types: COOPERATORS and COMPETITORS. Research shows about 60 percent are cooperators and that 75 percent of effective negotiators are cooperators. They tend to avoid defend-attack spirals and cycles of emotion-laden assigning of blame or disclaiming fault. Research shows about 24 percent of negotiators are truly competitive and only 12 percent of effective negotiators are competitive.

It is your objective in a negotiation to train the other side to be COOPERATORS by demonstrating that both sides can win, to show them that negotiating fairly and in good faith can produce an outcome that is beneficial for both sides. Very difficult to change the other side’s style, so be prepared to be competitive if you have to.

**What Women Have To Be Careful Of[[1]](#footnote-1)**

Negotiations are settings for conflict and confrontations, which are associated with competition and aggressiveness – usually associated with male traits. Studies show women are more peaceful, anti-violence and cooperative. Men grow up with conflict, aggressive­ness and competition, women often lack expertise in dealing with conflict because behavior and feelings associated with it have often been suppressed. Women are often socialized to believe conflict with men or people in authority is wrong, and feel vulnerable when faced with it.

Thus, women tend to emphasize harmony and cooperation over other interests, including their own. Research shows female pairs of negotiators can avoid discussing the main points and issues to avoid conflict and still believe they have negotiated effectively if their interaction was pleasant and the relationship was good. Empathy, often considered to be a particular strength of women, often leads them to behavior that promotes harmony over competition. Sometimes, by empathizing with others, women may undervalue their own interests and not develop self-empathy or enlightened self-interest.

Women usually listen more and speak less in group settings than men do. Women tend to talk less and are more easily interrupted and less likely to interrupt. In mixed groups they often adopt a deferential posture and are less likely to advocate their positions openly. At the same time, there is a tendency to be too revealing, open and talk too much about their attitudes, beliefs and concerns. This openness can be especially counterpro­ductive when someone competitive and aggressive is on the other side.

**WOMEN: BETTER AT THE BARGAINING TABLE[[2]](#footnote-2)**

Whether you are buying a used car, clinching a business deal or negotiat­ing a cease‑fire, you might be better off having a woman in your corner. People with more traditionally femi­nine personalities (mostly women) ap­proach negotiations from a win‑win strategy that brings results while preserving good feelings on both sides. Those with a more masculine personality (primarily men) employ a sports‑oriented win‑lose style, accord­ing to psychologists Roderick Gilkey and Leonard Greenhalgh of Dart­mouth College.

They set up simulated negotiations in which 64 business students hag­gled over a used car and television advertising time. Feminine students were more flexible, more willing to compromise, less deceptive and more likely to view the negotiations as part of a long‑term relationship.

A tougher bargaining stance may be useful if you never have to deal with the other person again, but in real life, says Greenhalgh, "one‑shot deals are rare." Most formal and in­formal decision‑making involves bar­gaining among people who see each other on a regular basis.

After years of observing men and women negotiate, Greenhalgh ob­serves, "Women can usually come to an agreement on friendly terms; they're better at avoiding impasses. I've seen men walk away from good deals and alienate the other party because they refuse to back down!”

Gilkey and Greenhalgh trace the differences in negotiating style to childhood sex‑role socialization, in which girls develop cooperative and interdependent relationships, while boys are encouraged to be independent and competitive. They emphasize that good negotiators should be flexible enough to adopt whichever style is better in a particular situation.

**PATTERNS OF NEGOTIATIONS**

1. COOPERATORS VS. COOPERATORS: Good combination. If a problem can be solved and an agreement reached, it will be. Often increases the gain for both sides (pie gets bigger).
2. COMPETITORS VS. COMPETITORS: They understand each other, although there is a higher risk of a breakdown and it consumes more time and resources, it is not a bad combination. Rarely is there an increase in the size of the pie, in fact when competitors try to maximize their own gain or share, the amount of the settlement decreases.
3. COOPERATORS VS. COMPETITORS: The most dangerous combination. The majority of negotiating problems occur with this combina­tion. The two sides don't speak the same language, don't have the same goals and don't understand each other. Invariably the cooperator gets taken advantage of.

There is no one best way. Good negotiators match the style of the other side.

Cooperators' Objectives Competitors' Objectives

1. Conduct self ethically 1. Maximize gain

2. Get a fair agreement 2. Win by outmaneuvering

3. Build trust 3. Relationships not important

Cooperator Traits Competitor Traits

1. Trustworthy, ethical, fair 1. Dominate, forceful, attack

2. Courteous, tactful, sincere 2. Crafty, rigid, strategic, uncooperative

3. Fair minded 3. Carefully observes opponent

4. Realistic opening position 4. Unrealistic opening

5. Does not use threats 5. Uses threats

6. Willing to share information 6. Reveals information only strategically, gradually

7. Probes opponent's position 7. Willing to stretch the facts

Cooperators are quintessential win-win negotiators – they can increase the size of the pie. On the other hand, competitors are win-lose negotiators – they don't care if the pie shrinks, as long as they get the biggest piece. Neither the cooperator nor the competitor is wrong, they just see the world differently. If you trust a competitor, you will be easily exploited. If you try to be pleasant and get along with or be well liked by a competitor, you will be seen as naive and weak and be taken advantage of. It is imperative to match the style of the other side. When in doubt, assume the other side is a competitor.

**How to Negotiate with Someone More Powerful than You[[3]](#footnote-3)**

by Carolyn O'Hara

Going into a negotiation with someone who holds more power than you do can be a daunting prospect.  Whether you are asking your boss for a new assignment or attempting to land a major business deal with a client, your approach to the negotiation can dramatically affect your chances of success. How can you make the best case for what you want?

**What the Experts Say**“There is often strength in weakness,” says Margaret Neale, the Adams Distinguished Professor of Management at Stanford Graduate School of Business. Having power typically [reduces a person’s ability](http://www.npr.org/2013/08/10/210686255/a-sense-of-power-can-do-a-number-on-your-brain?ft=1&f=1007) to understand how others think, see, and feel, so being in the less powerful position actually gives you a better vantage to accurately assess what the other party wants and how you can best deliver it. And when you do your homework, you’ll often find you’ve “underestimated your own power, and overestimated theirs,” says Jeff Weiss, a partner at Vantage Partners, a Boston-based consultancy specializing in corporate negotiations and relationship management, and author of the forthcoming [*HBR Guide to Negotiating*](http://hbr.org/product/hbr-guide-to-negotiating/an/14201-SBC-ENG)*.*Here’s how to negotiate for success.

**Buck yourself up**“Often we get fearful of the threat of competition,” says Weiss. We worry there are five other candidates being interviewed for a job, or six other vendors who can land a contract, and we lower our demands as a result. Do some hard investigation of whether those concerns are real, and consider what skills and expertise you bring to the table that other candidates do not. The other side is negotiating with you for a reason, says Neale. “Your power and influence come from the unique properties you bring to the equation.”

**Understand your goals and theirs**Make a list of what you want from the negotiation, and why. This exercise will help you determine what would cause you to walk away, so that you build your strategy within acceptable terms. Equally if not more crucial is to “understand what’s important to the other side,” says Neale. By studying your counterpart’s motivations, obstacles, and goals, you can frame your aims not as things they are giving up to you, but “as solutions to a problem that they have.”

**Prepare, prepare, prepare**“The most important thing is to be well prepared,” says Weiss. That involves [brainstorming in advance](http://blogs.hbr.org/2014/05/even-small-negotiations-require-preparation-and-creativity/) creative solutions that will work for both parties. For example, if the other side won’t budge from their price point, one of your proposals could be a longer-term contract that gives them the price they want but guarantees you revenue for a longer period of time. You also want to have data or past precedents at your disposal to help you make your case. If a potential client says they will pay you X for a job, having done your research allows you to counter with, “But the last three people you contracted with similar experience were paid Y.” Preparation gives you the information you need to “to get more of what you want,” says Neale.

**Listen and ask questions**Two of the most powerful strategies you can deploy are to listen well, which [builds trust](http://blogs.hbr.org/2014/06/the-simplest-way-to-build-trust/), and pose questions that encourage the other party to defend their positions. “If they can’t defend it, you’ve shifted the power a bit,” says Weiss. If your boss says he doesn’t think you are the right addition to a new project, for instance, ask, “What would that person look like?” Armed with that added information, says Neale, “you can then show him that you have those attributes or have the potential to be that person.”

**Keep your cool**One of the biggest mistakes a less powerful person can do in a negotiation is get reactive or [take the other person’s negative tone personally](http://blogs.hbr.org/2014/05/make-your-emotions-work-for-you-in-negotiations/). “Don’t mimic bad behavior,” says Weiss. If the other side makes a threat, and you retaliate with a threat, “you’re done.” Keep your side of the discussion focused on results, and resist the temptation to confuse yourself with the issue at hand, even if the negotiations involve assigning value to you or your product. “Know what your goals are and direct your strategy to that and not the other person’s behavior. You have to play the negotiation your way,” Weiss says.

**Stay flexible**The best negotiators have prepared enough that they understand the “whole terrain rather than a single path through the woods,” says Weiss. That means you won’t be limited to a single strategy of gives and gets, but multiple maneuvers as the negotiation progresses. If the other party makes a demand, ask them to explain their rationale. Suggest taking a few minutes to brainstorm additional solutions, or inquire if they’ve ever been granted the terms they are demanding. Maintaining flexibility in your moves means you can better shape a solution that’s not only good for you, says Neale, but also makes them “feel like they’ve won.”

**Principles to Remember**

Do:

* Put yourself in their shoes — it’s crucial to understand what’s important to the other side
* Remember your own value — you are at the table for a reason
* Ask questions — you’ll get valuable insight into their motivations and interests

Don’t:

* Wing it — nothing beats good preparation
* Depend on a single strategy — develop a range of responses to push the negotiation in your favor
* Copy aggressive behavior — if they make threats or demands, stick to your goals

**Case Study #1: Do your homework**Ben Koeneker knew the odds were stacked against him. Then the head of business development for a midsize Midwest telecom company, he was trying to convince Siemens, the multibillion-dollar electronics conglomerate, to give his firm an exclusive distribution contract for a new business communications product.  At the time, his $28 million company was known more for refurbishing than distribution. “We were tiny,” he says. “We were the ant shouting at the elephant.”

Koeneker did copious amounts of research prior to sitting down at the table. He researched Siemens products and why their current channels of distribution weren’t working well. He also made sure he knew that his own company could deliver on every level, preparing counterarguments for any doubts that might arise. “I knew we couldn’t pretend we could do something we couldn’t do,” he says.

When the negotiations began, he emphasized the pros of his company’s distribution model, rather than the cons he felt currently existed in Siemens’ current method. “If you spend too much time talking about the negatives, you’re basically telling them that they’re doing their business wrong.” He also pointed out that signing with his firm would free up money to devote to marketing, which he knew from his research was something that Siemens wanted.

A turning point came when a senior Siemens executive said that while he was impressed with the proposal, he wondered if Koeneker’s company could scale effectively if the product line took off. Two rivals to Koeneker’s firm, the executive said, were bigger and could more easily handle growth. “I turned to him and said, ‘Are those two companies interested in distributing your product at this time?’” Koeneker says. “I already knew the answer from my research that those companies had turned them down.” He followed up by adding that while his firm was small, it was better thought of as “boutique,” with the unique ability to focus completely on the Siemens brand.

Shortly after, they inked the contract.

**Case Study #2: Know your value**Management coach Ginger Jenks didn’t want to lose her client. Michael\* had asked her to work on a side consulting project, but balked at her proposed fee. Though he had been paying her usual rate for several years, he went into “hard negotiation mode” for the extra work, Jenks says. “He told me he could get someone else for less than a third of my price.”

Jenks valued Michael’s continued business, but she knew she wasn’t willing to lower her rate. “I was fairly confident that he wanted me to do the work,” she says, “and I was certain that I did not want to feel ‘nickel and dimed’ on the project.” She decided her strongest strategy was not to take it personally that he was acting so insulted by her price. “I knew it was just a negotiating tactic on his end.”

When they met again to discuss terms, Jenks held fast to her initial proposal. She knew from hearing him relate stories of past negotiations that he respected strength and tenacity. She also knew that he valued good work above all else, and likely didn’t want the hassle of finding someone new.

At the table, Jenks stressed their great track record together, suggesting that if he could find someone who could do as good a job as he knew she would do, he should go elsewhere. Throughout, Jenks reminded herself that negotiating “is a little like dating,” she says. “If you are too interested, you lose power. But if you can remain calmly interested but still detached, that creates power.”

Michael thought it over for a few days, and then accepted Jenks’s original proposal. “It’s critical to remember that you have something the other person wants also,” she says. “Even if you aren’t in the power position, you have something to offer.”

*\*not his real name*

**Two Kinds of People You Should Never Negotiate With[[4]](#footnote-4)**

by Judith White

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The first thing negotiation experts teach is to “[separate the people from the problem](http://www.amazon.com/Getting-Yes-Negotiate-Agreement-Without/dp/0743526937).” The vast majority of the time, this is sound advice. But as a psychologist, I know that [approximately 1% of the time](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/statistics/1Borderline.shtml), people *are* the problem.  And in such cases, normal negotiation strategies just don’t work. Here’s how to recognize that rare situation and what to do about it.

First, determine what sort of person or people you’re trying to negotiate with (i.e. your counterparty).

Here are two types of counterparties you *should* negotiate with, even when it seems difficult.

**1. Emotional counterparties.**Emotion in and of itself shouldn’t preclude you from reaching a successful agreement – it’s natural for people to feel strong emotion in a conflict situation. Once the conflict is identified and addressed, and parties are allowed to vent, emotion usually dissipates. Keep in mind that some people (and cultures) simply express more feelings than others. Also, some negotiators use emotion strategically to influence the other party. Recognize the emotion, but don’t let it stop you from negotiating.

**2. Unreasonable counterparties.**We often think people are being unreasonable when they don’t agree with our logic and evidence. But more often, people who disagree with us are simply seeing different problems, and even different sets of facts, than we are. Even if you think the other party is being unreasonable, it’s still possible to bridge the gap and close a deal.

But here are two types of counterparties you*should never*negotiate with:

**1. A counterparty who alternates between conciliation and provocation.**People are usually more provocative, or difficult to deal with, at the outset of a negotiation. Then they become more conciliatory as the outlines of a settlement develop. Beware the person who is conciliatory at first, then becomes provocative — and then when you’re about to walk away becomes conciliatory again, and then provocative again. This behavior suggests that he will never be satisfied, nor finished, with the negotiation. What he wants is not a negotiated settlement, but control — over the process and over you. The time and energy it will take to continue will eventually outweigh any potential gains you could achieve through negotiation.

**2. A counterparty who persists in seeing people in terms of absolute good and evil.** Negotiation is a method for resolving conflicts of interest, not for adjudicating who is at fault. Most people, once they understand this, are willing to exchange concessions in order to satisfy their underlying interests. Watch out for someone who describes people as absolutely good and blameless, or as absolutely evil and responsible. This behavior suggests that he or she lacks the mindset necessary for negotiation. What this person wants is for evil people to be held accountable and punished, and because you are in a conflict with her, you may fall into that category. Walking away would deprive her of the opportunity to punish you. Therefore, if you negotiate, you can expect the process to be painful. You can also expect not to receive meaningful concessions, because this type of person does not believe you deserve them.

Even the best negotiators cannot reach a win-win outcome with people like this, as their underlying interests can’t be addressed with a settlement. The best negotiation advice and practice will not help you in these rare situations. Instead, here are four steps you should take:

**Be realistic.**This person is not going to change. There is no negotiation strategy you can use to make him or her change. Your goal should be to extricate yourself with the most gains (or least losses) possible. Let’s say you have a tenant behind on the rent. It’s worth negotiating with an emotional, even unreasonable tenant. Deep down, her primary interest is to keep the apartment. She can ultimately be trusted to act in her own interest. On the other hand, it’s not worth negotiating with an alternatively conciliatory, then provocative tenant who blames his neighbors and the property manager for his situation. Deep down, his primary interest is not the apartment; it’s his need to control the people around him.

**Stop making concessions.**The purpose of concessions is to reach an agreement, but since you’ll never do that (no matter how much you’re willing to give up!), don’t waste your time. That doesn’t mean you won’t incur significant losses. Your goal should be to minimize those losses. For example, if someone on your team fits the description of a no-win negotiator, you may already have made many concessions and picked up her share of the work, while she has yet to follow through on her promises to you. Enough! Do whatever is necessary to get the project finished, but stop making offers to her.

**Reduce your interdependence.**Take whatever steps you can to reduce your interdependence with this person. You don’t want to depend on him for anything, or owe him anything, going forward. This means, for example, that a lump sum payment for services is better than a payment plan. Working independently on separate pieces of a project is better than working together on the whole thing. If you must continue to work with this person, remember that even very immature children can still play nicely side-by-side if each is given his or her own set of toys.

**Make it public, hold them accountable, and use a third party if you can.**Avoid private discussions, if possible. Get everything out in the open and put everything in writing. Try to bump accountability to the next level, so someone higher up has to take action if the other party does not follow through on his or her obligations. If you can utilize a third party, like a mediator, arbitrator, or judge, then do so.

Remember, 99 times out of 100, your counterpart has rational underlying interests that you will eventually discover with patience and the right strategies. The [secret to negotiating](http://books.simonandschuster.com/Passion-to-Win/Sumner-Redstone/9780684862255), after all, is to find out what the other party wants and how much it’s worth to him. In those rare cases when your counterparty wants to use the negotiation to control or punish you, however, it doesn’t matter how much it’s worth to him. It’s worth more to you to be free of him and able to get on with your business. Isn’t it?

1. Adapted from Negotiation: Strategies for mutual gain (The basic seminar of the Harvard Program on Negotiation, Lavinia Hall, Editor, Sage Publications, Newbury Park, CA, 1993. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Psychology Today, "Crosstalk," Beverly McLeod, December, 1984, p. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <http://blogs.hbr.org/2014/06/how-to-negotiate-with-someone-more-powerful-than-you/>, June 6, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <http://blogs.hbr.org/2014/06/two-kinds-of-people-you-should-never-negotiate-with/> , June 18, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)