

Basic guidelines for cooperative negotiations

Key phases in negotiations

1. Preparation

- Defining our position
- Gathering information about the other side
- Determination of the bottom-line price and initial offer
- Hypothetical examination of possible alternatives of both sides
- Awareness of possible exits if we do not agree
- Determining space
- Role assignment and strategy selection

What do I/we want?	What can the other side offer me/us?
What I/we think, that other side wants?	What can I/we offer to them in this respect?

Questions in preparations

- What is most important to us?
- What is most important for the other side?
- Is there a common, higher goal?
- What are our additional goals and what is their significance?
- What are the additional goals of the other party and what is their significance?
- What is our negotiation interval for each goal?
- What is our desired outcome?
- Where are our ceilings for each element of the negotiation?
- What offer will we start with?
- What is the probable possibility or what will we have to give up and will we be able to give up?
- Are there any objective criteria that can be used in negotiations (to determine starting points, initial offers, concessions, performance evaluations ...)?

Questions for determining our position

- What do I lose if I don't reach an agreement?
- How far can I go, when I have to stop negotiating?
- What will happen if I stop negotiating?
- How much and what does it cost me?
- Do I even need another side for my goal?
- Do they need me for their goal?
- What do they lose if I stop negotiating?

- How can I improve my position?
- How can I weaken the position of the other side?
- What is the one thing I can not give up in the process? (the crucial point, “non-negotiable”)

How to determine position of the other side?

- Possible personal or business knowledge of the other party.
- Review of the other party's website and competition, articles in professional publications, other party's annual reports.
- Talk to industry experts or neutral parties.
- Informal questions to the other side about business and the business climate.
- Role play - put yourself in their shoes and imagine what you would do in their place (extremely important!).

2. The beginning

- Choice of space and time
- Presentation of the negotiators
- Determination of authorizations
- Setting the agenda
- Presentation of starting positions or outline of the situation

3. Exploration

- Personal stories
- Reducing possible frustrations and lowering emotional tension
- Start of communication
- Establishing the facts
- Determining the true interests of the individuals
- Identifying common interests

4. Finding solutions and negotiating solutions

- Creative search for solutions
- Choosing possible solutions
- Selection of objective criteria and procedures
- Negotiations (mutual shifts or concessions)
- First possible conclusions and agreement on parts of the solution
- Detection of additional objections
- Agreeing on a solution
- Checking the reality of the conclusions

5. The end

- Concluding an agreement
- Agreement on the future of cooperation
- Concluding rituals

6. Fulfillment of the agreement

Strategies in cooperative negotiation

- Treat the other side as a partner and not as an adversary
- Listen and ask for further explanation
- Demonstrate an understanding of the other party's position
- Express your expectations and reasons for them
- Allow the other to think about your points
- Express yourself respectfully and take into account points of the other
- Highlight common goals and common interests

- Show strength and at the same time a willingness to cooperate
- Return the objections in the form of a question
- Invite to develop objective criteria
- Search for solutions that will be good for both parties (win-win)
- Invite the other to find common solutions
- Creative problem solving
- Increasing the pie
- Learning and growth

Common mistakes of negotiators

- giving priority to short-term results;
- dealing with people instead of problems;
- insufficient willingness to negotiate;
- turning negotiations into debate;
- intolerance in negotiations;
- unwillingness to give in;
- underestimating oneself and one's negotiating positions;
- reacting too quickly to the opponent's suggestions, questions;
- insisting on an agreement at all costs;
- not verify the authority of the other party as to whether or not it has the power to conclude the agreement;
- Not trying to empathize with the opponent (the biggest mistake).

How to move from a dead end?

- Try to understand the reasons why the negotiations stopped and start a conversation about it.
- Summarize the situation again and what has been agreed so far.
- Go back and try to gather even more information about the situation and the background.
- Review again what is important to the other side and how you can help it.
- Stop or postpone negotiations to a new date.
- Find out with the other party what will happen if you don't reach an agreement.
- Try a time-limited solution.
- Engage a mediator.