

## **When Negotiations Stall Position the Other Side for Easy Acceptance**

**by  
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When you're negotiating with people who have studied negotiating, and are proud of their ability to negotiate, you can get ridiculously close to agreement, and the entire negotiation will still fall apart on you. When it does, it's probably not the price or terms of the agreement that caused the problem, it's the ego of the other person as a negotiator. When that happens, Power Negotiators use a simple technique that positions the other person for easy acceptance.

Let's say that you market advertising specialties, such as rulers, with the company's name on it-or custom printed baseball caps and T-shirts. You have made an appointment to meet with the manager at a local appliance store. What you may not realize is that just before you showed up in his office, the manager said to the owner of the store, "You just watch me negotiate with this advertising specialty representative. I know what I'm doing, and I'll get us a good price."

Now he's not doing as well as he hoped in the negotiation and he may be reluctant to agree to your proposal because he doesn't want to feel that he lost to you as a negotiator. That can happen, even when the other person knows that your proposal is fair and it satisfies his needs in every way.

So, when this happens you must find a way to make the other person feel good about giving in to you. You must Position for Easy Acceptance. Power Negotiators know that the best way to do this is to make a small concession just at the last moment. The size of the concession can be ridiculously small, and you can still make it work because it's not the size of the concession that's critical, but the timing.

So, you might say, "We just can't budge another dime on the price, but I tell you what. If you'll go along with the price, I'll personally supervise the printing to be sure that it goes smoothly."

Perhaps you were planning to do that anyway, but the point is that you've been courteous enough to position the other person so that he can respond, "Well all right, if you'll do that for me, we'll go along with the price." Then he doesn't feel that he lost to you in the negotiation. He felt that he traded off.

Positioning for Easy Acceptance is another reason why you should never go in with your best offer up front. If you have offered all of your concessions already, before you get to the end of the negotiation, you won't have anything left with which to position the other side.

### **Here are some other small concessions that you can use to position:**

You're selling a boat, so you offer to take the buyers out and show them how to sail it. If you sell office equipment, offer to inventory their supplies and set them up on an automatic reordering system.

You're selling a car, so you offer to include the snow chains.

Hold this price for 90 days in case they want to duplicate this order.

You're hiring someone and can't pay him or her what they asked, but you offer to review it after 90 days.

Offer forty-five day terms instead of 30 days.

Offer three years for the price of two on an extended service warranty.

Remember, it's the timing of the concession that counts, not the size. The concession can be ridiculously small and still be effective. Using this Gambit, Power Negotiators can make the other person feel good about giving in to them.

Never, ever gloat. Never, when you get through negotiating, say to the other person, "Harry, you know, if you'd hung in there a little bit longer, I was prepared to do this and this and this for you." Harry's going to say unkind things about your mommy when you do that.

I realize that in the normal course of business you'd never be foolish enough to gloat over the other person because you felt you out-negotiated him. However, you get into trouble with this one when you're negotiating with someone you know really well. Perhaps you've been playing golf with this person for years. Now you're negotiating something. You both know you're negotiating and you're having fun playing the game. Finally, he says to you, "All right. We're all agreed on this and we're not going to back out, but just for my own satisfaction, what was your real bottom line there?" Of course you are tempted to brag a little, but don't do it. He will remember that for the next 20 years.

Always when you're through negotiating-congratulate. However poorly you think the other people may have done, congratulate them. Say, "Wow. Did you do a fantastic job negotiating with me. I realize that I didn't get as good a deal as I could have done, but frankly, it was worth it because I learned so much about negotiating. You were brilliant." You want the other person to feel that he or she won in the negotiations.

Have you ever watched attorneys in court? They'll cut each other to ribbons inside the courtroom. However, outside you'll see the district attorney go up to the defense attorney and say, "Wow, were you brilliant in there. You really were. True your guy got 30 years, but I don't think anybody could have done a better job than you did." The district attorney understands that he'll be in another courtroom one day with that same defense attorney, and he doesn't want the attorney feeling that this is a personal contest. Gloating over a victory will just make the attorney more determined than ever to win the rematch.

Similarly, you will be dealing with that other person again. You don't want her remembering that she lost to you. It would make her only more determined to get the better of you in a rematch.

**Key points to remember:**

If the other person is proud of his ability to negotiate, his egotistical need to win may stop you from reaching agreement.

Position the other person to feel good about giving in to you with a small concession made just at the last moment.

Because timing is more important than the size of the concession, the concession can be ridiculously small and still be effective.

Always congratulate the other person when you get through negotiating, however poorly you think he or she did.

Roger Dawson is a professional speaker and the author of two of best selling books on negotiating: *Secrets of Power Negotiating* and *Secrets of Power Negotiating for Salespeople*, both published by Career Press. He was inducted into the Speaker Hall of Fame in 1991. You can contact him at [rogdawson@aol.com](mailto:rogdawson@aol.com). His website address is: <http://rdawson.com>.