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“Real Life Negotiating”

by Arnold Butler

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About the Author

Arnold Butler started as a salesman and believes the success he enjoyed was based in part on his ability to negotiate on his own behalf and as part of the sales team.

He said, "I enjoyed negotiating with clients and suppliers as part of my job and also on my own behalf when we needed a new car or any other major purchase."

"I hope my book will be a help for people that want to be better negotiators but don't have the time or maybe the budget to learn through professional coaching clinics.

"I want to help readers get a head start with real life negotiating."

"I've given you some of the best tips and advice which I've learned and tested in the workplace."

"I've kept it simple and straight-forward without using any technical or academic terms."

"That's the way we should negotiate unless we are working in an area where technical terms are commonly used."

"I hope the ebook will cut the learning curve for you if you are new to deal-making or help you improve your results if you have been doing deals for a while."

"I believe that you will also find these tips helpful outside of your work."

"Everybody negotiates every day with their family, people in shops or other businesses and elsewhere. My book may help you in these situations too."

Introduction



A negotiation is any discussion between two or more people which involves an agreement for action that affects all parties.

That could be about the sale of a product by one business to another, leasing new premises, buying a new scooter for your young son or getting

that son to do his share of the household chores.

Whether you make deals as part of your job or just with your family and local business people, you are negotiating almost every day of your life in some area.

You may already do well with most of your negotiations and believe that you are naturally a good negotiator.

But, some of the tips and strategies in my ebook might improve the results you are getting now.

If you find some types of negotiation stressful or believe that you have not been getting the results you would like for any other reason, I will share techniques which will improve your results in the future.

Basic Rules of Negotiating

Every experienced negotiator builds up their own list of negotiating rules, based on what has worked for them when making deals. The tactics and tips in my book have worked for me and people I've worked with or learned from.

I hope you'll find the explanations about why I use particular methods in certain types of situations valuable. But, everyone is different and each reader will need to make some adjustments to fit their own personal values and situation.

Let's get started.

Useful Skills for Negotiators

This section contains some suggestions about skills which you will need to get the best results you can with your negotiations and tips about how to improve in any of these areas where you lack experience.

Overcoming Nerves.

You may be nervous about any negotiating that you have to do as part of your job or in other situations.

This may be because you have not got the results you want from previous deals.

Just remember that no-one gets everything they desire with every one of their deals.

If you have a negotiation which does not work as well as you expected, don't dwell on the negative outcome so that it weighs you down.

Don't attach your feeling of self-worth to the outcome of your next negotiation. Almost nobody wins every deal they do.

Regret is a bitter, negative force which can, over time, affect your health as well as your wallet. Study any lessons that you learned from the occasion and use them to help you prepare better for your next deal.

Then, put some time into better preparation before your next negotiation so that you are better able to handle the offers and demands from the other side.

You may just not be comfortable making offers and asserting yourself.

Or, you may think that every negotiation involves someone winning and the other party losing.

But, most negotiations involve each party getting what they regard as a good outcome. Otherwise they would not finalize their agreement.

Some people negotiate as if they are at war with the other party. But, you can usually get better results by focusing on producing the best result for yourself while ensuring that the other party gets a deal which they are happy

with as well.

Do you feel that we should just put out our best offer and then the other party can accept or reject it?

That attitude will probably cause you to pay more for whatever you buy because most people and businesses build a cushion into the prices they offer, even with many "specials".

Also, you are entitled to the best deal you can arrange. If you are used to paying the list price for everything (less any advertised discounts), you might be surprised how many businesses will agree to your request for a discount or some kind of bonus with your significant purchases when you negotiate instead of just accepting what they offer everyone.

If the other party is not happy with their end of the agreement, they will not agree to it.

But, few would mind that you asked.

The same applies when you offer something for sale. If the first prospect quickly accepts the first price you tell them, you will probably wonder if you sold the item too cheaply. That can take some of the shine off your successful sale. But, all you can do is go on to the next deal.

Most people expect to negotiate for most items and services which they buy. If you make an offer lower than their stated price, you will usually get a polite refusal to negotiate. Or, sometimes, a counter offer somewhere in-between the two prices.

Presentation Skills

Knowing how to present yourself and your ideas is a very valuable skill, especially with regard to negotiating. But, it also builds your self-confidence and social skills.

A simple way to help improve your skills is to look for a course on Public Speaking or similar topics at local Adult Education organizations.

You might also consider joining an organization such as Toastmasters

International or other groups which provide their Members with professional standard training in public speaking in a supportive and friendly atmosphere. If your time or funds are very limited, you could also arrange to practice with some friends and work colleagues during breaks, or in your own time. You could be surprised at the improvements you will obtain in a fairly short time. These activities will help you to explain your offers and other points more clearly and also to improve your listening and other interpersonal skills.

Listening



In any sort of negotiation, you should try to focus on what the other person is saying and also what their attitude and gestures may indicate. This can be difficult because we are often surrounded by distractions while we are talking with our colleagues and clients.

We can all become better listeners and you will be surprised how little effort it really takes.

Just by reducing the time you speak and increasing the amount of listening you do can help. You cannot learn as much while you are talking as you can when you are listening.

One of the great benefits that good listeners enjoy is that almost everyone tends to like them and even trust them.

And you will think that your memory is also improving when you take the few steps needed to better listening!

The reason for this is that most people really have very good memories. But they don't focus enough on what they are told or the person who is telling them, so they cannot recall much of what they were told.

Instead of recognizing their lack of attention as the cause of this problem, they trot out the standard excuse that they have a very poor memory. That is not going to impress anyone. When you keep repeating that line, your

subconscious takes notice and you will find your recall actually becoming worse unless you take positive steps toward better listening.

If we pay proper attention to what we are told at the time, we will remember it and recall it much better, even months later.

When somebody has said something that you believe is particularly important, it's a good idea to start your next comment with the point that he made but slightly rephrased in your own words.

If the other person says something that you are not sure about, ask them for clarification right away. That way, you show that what they said was important to you and you want to avoid any possibility of misunderstanding what was said.

That's going to please the other person every time.

We don't have to stand still like a rock with a fixed grin on our face while the other person is talking. We can encourage the speaker with visual signals that show our active interest in what they are saying, such as nodding, smiling or leaning slightly toward them.

It's also important that we don't assume we know what somebody is going to say, because we may end up with a false impression of what they mean.

Some people start thinking about the next thing which they are going to say as soon as they finish their previous comment, so they don't absorb what they are being told. This is often obvious and disappointing to the other people.

Starting to speak as soon as the other person stops talking can also give the impression that you are less than interested in what they say and only focused on getting all your points made.

Just waiting a few seconds before replying is likely to give a much better impression.

Ask Questions

I believe that asking more questions will make most people better

negotiators.

Asking questions will usually get you more information but it can also help you to connect more strongly with the other person.

When we ask people for information or their opinion, we are subtly complimenting them and giving them a chance to show that they have some expertise in the subject.

That makes them feel good and perhaps even a little better about dealing with you.

Showing interest in their views will almost always encourage them to listen more carefully to ours.

Questions should always be asked in a straight-forward way even if you think that the other person's last statement is suspect. Give them the benefit of the doubt until you have enough information to be sure about their motives.

They may simply be repeating what someone else told them and have no personal intent to try to deceive you.

Some of the most knowledgeable deal-makers I know keep the depth of knowledge they have about a topic to themselves and let the other people display theirs.

They say it can be a good idea to ask a question where you already know the most likely answer. This can tell you about the reliability of the other information that person is giving.

Make a Connection with the other Person

When you start to negotiate, it can help if you try to find some common ground which may bring you and the other person closer together.

You don't have to arrange to have dinner with them, but getting to know a little about each other and finding areas of mutual interest helps you to start talking with each other on a level where a mutually satisfactory agreement is easier to get to.

Humor

Keep your sense of humor with you at all times.

Use humor sparingly and only where it is relevant and not likely to offend.

If you're going to tell a joke, make sure that you prepare for that as well as you can.

Professional comedians prepare their off-the-cuff jokes as thoroughly as their set routines. They also spend almost as much time polishing those quick remarks so they sound new every time they use them.

You don't need to spend a lot of time on it but you want to know the joke well enough that you don't forget the punchline (point of the joke).

If someone else tells a joke, always be a good audience for them even if you already know the joke. Give them the response they want and they may do the same for you.

It's not a good idea to jump in with another joke just because you thought of a similar or possibly better one. Let them have the warm afterglow from their joke and get on with the business.

Don't use any joke that might offend even one person in a group.

Giving offence to even one person will also lower their friends' opinion of you and your business as well.

Body Language



Body Language is a system for interpreting to the various gestures and movements which we display without conscious effort of intent.

A simple example is when someone reacts to what you say by leaning toward you. This is fairly obviously a sign of heightened interest.

If you have not already done so, I suggest that you read up about what

people's body language may reveal to you.

But, remember that body language is just a number of indicators which may help us evaluate other people's words more accurately than if we just rely on the words they use.

It is not a true science and there can be a significant possibility of error.

It can only give you clues. The accuracy of your interpretation depends on your experience as well as your knowledge of the particular people and the situation.

If someone folds their arms across their chest while you are talking to them, they may be losing interest in what you say, silently rejecting your view point or just be feeling a little cold.

Some people are very adept at interpreting body language because they have practiced and refined their use of it over a considerable time.

It will be unlikely to get similar results after just a couple of tries. To get the most consistent results, you need to keep practicing and reviewing your results.

My own study of body language has given me positive results and I believe it will be worthwhile for you to put some time into it. Just don't make it the only system you use to evaluate the spoken and silent messages which you get when dealing with people.

Gamblers, palm readers and most politicians use it very effectively to get information from the people around them and also to present themselves in the best light.

Yes, body language can be faked. Actors do it all the time.

But, it is much harder to do this effectively than it might seem. Anyone doing this needs strong motivation and plenty of practice to be convincing.

Otherwise, you and the other people they are talking to may not be sure that they are trying to mislead, but you will probably be able to sense that there is something that's not right in the way they present themselves.

The Effect of Cultural Background and Upbringing

One important factor which trips up some people when they try to "read" other people's body language is the effect of cultural differences which can be strong influences on a person's body language.

People from some areas will avoid direct eye contact because they feel it is not polite.

People from other regions may feel that a direct gaze usually indicates sincerity and avoiding someone's eyes is a sign of disinterest or worse.

Some cultures view touching other people they have just met as acceptable while others do it less often or even avoid it as much as possible.

The personal space which is needed for different people to feel comfortable can vary widely. In some societies, people will make conversation at a distance of a couple of feet from the other person while people from other areas won't begin any dialogue unless they are much closer.

Even people within the same area can have quite different views about the personal space they need during discussions.

You also need to be aware that the way that common gestures are interpreted also has significant variations in different countries.

Even a common gesture like moving your head from side to side has opposing meanings in different parts of the world.

Some gestures which may be generally accepted, or at least tolerated, in your country may cause irritation or even offence to people from different parts of our World.

Three examples are the "thumbs up", "V for Victory" and "Okay" hand gestures.

When you are negotiating, keep gestures and sounds to a minimum.

When in doubt, try to avoid them altogether.

Checking Your Own Body's Signals.

It's a good idea to check the impression which other people might get from

your body language and other unconscious indicators.

You may have developed habits and mannerisms which detract from the effect of your message.

The best way is to have someone record you on a video so that you can see yourself in a way that is much closer to how you appear to other people than, say, a still photograph.

If you find some movements or speech patterns that you want to modify, don't try to fix everything at once.

Just tackle one thing at a time and keep at it.

It could take weeks to make even a very small change. The previous habit has probably been in place for years and won't go away overnight.

Because we've been talking and smiling through our lives, we all think we're pretty good at it.



Does your smile look natural and sincere or have you, over time, developed one which looks forced?

Do you keep your eyes on the other person's face when you are talking to them or do your eyes wander over their body or away from them and around the room?

Empathy

Empathy is the ability to connect with, or at least understand, the motivations of other

people.

It's the ability to think like you are walking in the other person's shoes.

If we always just view everything from our own perspective, we make it much harder to achieve mutual satisfaction with even the simplest negotiation.

It's quite easy to develop more empathy by just thinking about the other

person's goals.

Patience

My uncle Archie was an enthusiastic amateur fisherman and he used to take me on some of his trips.

I learned from his example that you caught more fish if you were patient and learned all you could about the habits, likes and dislikes of the fish.

I've never matched his skill with the rod but the patience he instilled in me has helped with many deals.

I've seen people end up with less than they expected because their eagerness to push their point of view made them interrupt the other person.

This caused offence to the other person or has prevented them getting all the necessary information which the other person was trying to provide to them.

It might have been to their advantage to keep listening and let the other person say everything that they wanted to before opening their mouth again.

Persistence

Any negotiator that lacks persistence will not make many good deals.

It helps you to keep going through to the conclusion of the deal.

But, it can give the impression that we are totally focused on just getting a good result for ourselves.

So, we may win one deal but reduce the chances of building a profitable long-term relationship if we don't also demonstrate that we are also interested in providing an outcome that will be good for all concerned.

Using Pauses and Silence

The pause is a very powerful tool for public speakers and also for negotiators. Many people rush through what they have to say, but they don't realize that this can make it harder for their listeners to fully understand exactly what they mean.

Make your points without pressure or haste and pause from time to time so

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