



# Getting to YES

*"Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate" - John F Kennedy*

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# Introduction

Negotiation is the art of settling differences with people. It is a process by which agreements or compromises are reached without arguments and disputes.

In any time of disagreement between two individuals or two parties, the aim of each of those individuals is to achieve the best outcome for their position. However, in any negotiation, principles of fairness, mutual benefit for both individuals, and maintaining the relationship are keys to a successful outcome.

Negotiations are part of our everyday lives. We constantly negotiate consciously or unconsciously with our families, friends, children, vendors, partners, and colleagues. Yet, the thought of “negotiating” often frightens us. We tend to think of negotiations as ‘stubborn haggling’ or a situation where we will lose what we are fighting for. Fear of conflict and fear of the consequences of negotiating might lead to a negative attitude toward negotiations. Another reason why people hesitate to settle is that they lack knowledge about the negotiating process or the individual with whom they must negotiate.

The truth is that negotiating is a healthy way to solve problems, and strong negotiation skills can make a lot of difference in a variety of relationships, despite differences in interests.





## WHAT IS NEGOTIATION IN THE WORKPLACE?

Within the context of a workplace, negotiation is the process of coming to an agreement between two or more individuals or parties – employers, employees, co-workers, parties outside of the workplace, or even a combination of these – that is mutually acceptable. One of the main features of negotiation is compromise or give-and-take between the involved parties.

## THE OUTCOMES OF NEGOTIATIONS

Here are some points to remember about the outcomes of negotiations

1. Negotiations always consider both parties' needs.
2. Negotiations are always mutually acceptable.
3. There is always some compromise or give-and-take between both parties.
4. Negotiated agreements do not have to involve both parties meeting in the middle, as one side might have more leverage than the other.
5. Negotiations might end in formal agreements (contracts), or they may result in a less formal understanding (a verbal agreement) of a solution or course of action.





# Chapter 1: The Importance of Skilled Negotiators at the Workplace

Disagreements are frequent in the workplace. But good negotiators can find a solution to the most distasteful disputes while at the same time ensuring that relationships are maintained, and productivity does not suffer. With excellent negotiating skills (the ability to analyze a problem, give attention, control emotions, communicate effectively, work in a team, maintain good relationships), a negotiator can help improve the relationship between two disagreeing parties. They can help strike a mutual deal that benefits both parties without hurting either of their sentiments. Here are four reasons why skilled negotiators are necessary for the workplace.



## 1. Negotiators are beneficial to leaders and followers.

If you can negotiate a situation, it not only benefits the parties involved, but it also helps the organization's leadership and its employees. Negotiating skills are an essential part of business meetings and also to accomplishing contracts.





## 2. Negotiators provide win-win solutions.

Successful negotiators consider both party's interests. A deal is struck so that both parties are happy and satisfied.



## 3. Negotiators improve the final result.

Any negotiation aims to get the best deal for the organization as well as for the employees involved. Excellent negotiation skills ensure this is possible.



## 4. Negotiators gain respect.

If you have excellent negotiation skills and can solve workplace problems amicably, you will earn the respect of your employees. With respect, you also earn their trust and increased productivity.

Negotiation skills are critical for effective teamwork, managing conflicts, and decision making. These skills are needed to improve the quality of our decisions and our communication. Not everyone is born with excellent negotiating skills, but these skills can be developed and enhanced. Acquiring good negotiation skills is not only useful in our business lives but our personal lives as well.





# Chapter 2:

## The 4 Elements of Negotiation

Negotiating strategies do not have to be carried out in a harsh and demanding manner. Nor do they have to be carried out in a friendly and accommodating manner. The best negotiating strategies are designed to produce wise outcomes that are reached efficiently and amicably. Here

Here are four elements of a successful negotiation. By learning these, you can improve your negotiation skills significantly.



### 1. People – separate the people from the problem

Strong emotions can arise during a disagreement, and these emotions can compromise and complicate negotiations. Negotiators must deal with personality issues and emotions separately from the problem at stake.

*For example, if two departments are fighting over resources, then their leaders must confront the strong emotions behind the dispute by using active listening and other communication techniques. The leaders must remember that the*





*goal is not to try to win here but to find a solution through a better understanding of each party's concerns.*



## **2. Interests – focus on interests and not positions**

It's easy for negotiators to get caught up in who must win. Negotiators must not waste time trying to figure out which party must win, or even how to reach a 'compromise point' between the two opposing sides. Instead, they must look beyond the hard stances that the two sides take and must identify the interests of both parties – their motivations, wants, and basic needs. A solution must be based on these interests.

*For example, two siblings want to host their mother's birthday party. One sibling wants to host it in a restaurant, while the other wants to host the party at home. Understanding the deeper interests behind their standpoints can lead to a solution. The former might want to host the party in a restaurant because they do not have the time for home preparations. The latter might want to host the party at home because they are concerned about the costs incurred at a restaurant. With this understanding of their interests, they can now decide on an amicable solution – perhaps a restaurant that is not costly.*

*This type of interest-based negotiation can help fulfill both party's needs.*





### 3. Options – provide options for mutual benefit

Good negotiators do not settle for the first agreement that is reached. Instead, they devote their time to brainstorm on a wide range of ‘options’ that are advantageous to both parties. In a negotiation, options refer to choices that parties might consider to satisfy their interests.

*For example, an employee might insist on a higher salary. On the other hand, his employer might be concerned about being fully staffed. Several options could be provided:*

- (i) The employer agrees to raise the employee’s salary by a certain percentage.*
- (ii) The employee agrees to work for the same salary, but his responsibilities are reduced.*
- (iii) The employee is willing to concede on vacation days in return for a higher salary.*



### 4. Criteria – use objective criteria

Instead of allowing both parties to argue on whose “facts” are correct (that will lead to an inefficient compromise or an impasse), negotiators must rely on objective criteria. Objective criteria are fair and independent standards that are used to settle differences in a negotiation.





Both parties agree beforehand regarding which objective criteria to consult and agree to abide by the outcome.

*For example, the parties might agree to stay true to standards such as expert opinions, law, or industry protocol.*



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# Chapter 3: The 6 Stages of Negotiation

Every negotiator aims to achieve desirable outcomes. Following a structured approach will help you approach negotiation the right way and lead to those desirable outcomes. Here are the six stages of negotiation that every negotiator must follow.

This chapter covers a lot of what you already know now about what makes an excellent customer service strategy.

## Stage 1: Preparation

The preparation stage is the first stage of negotiation. As a negotiator, you must be aware of all the essential facts of the situation, so that you can clarify your own position. Gather all the background information needed. To negotiate from a position of strength, you must have all the information regarding both parties.

Gather all the necessary information beforehand to avoid further disagreements and to help avoid unnecessarily wasting time during the negotiation meeting.





## Stage 2: Discussion

During this stage, both parties get to put forward their case as they see it – their understanding of the problem. Your skills as a negotiator are critical during this stage as you will need to question, listen, and clarify.

Don't hesitate to take notes during this stage. Record all the points that are put forward. It is important to listen attentively to both parties, as it is very easy for them to say a lot and for you to listen too little. Give each side an equal opportunity to present their case.

## Stage 3: Clarification

Once the discussion stage comes to an end, the next step is to clarify all the points that were put forth during the discussion stage. Clarify the goals, interests, and viewpoints of both parties. List each of the factors in order of priority. Determine what the real needs of both parties are. Get a handle on the objectives of the parties that are concerned. What are the real issues involved?

Through the clarification stage, you can identify or even establish some common ground. Clarification is also vital to avoid misunderstandings that could cause barriers to reaching a beneficial outcome.





## Stage 4: Hard bargaining and decision-making for a win-win outcome

In a win-win outcome, both parties feel that they have gained something positive. Although it is not always possible, this should be the ultimate goal of your negotiation process.

During this stage, you might need to come up with alternative strategies and compromises. A compromise is a positive alternative that can often achieve better benefits for all those who are involved. Both parties let go of their original positions in a settlement and agree to a third solution (the compromise).

## Stage 5: Agreement

A mutual agreement can be reached once both parties' viewpoints and interests have been understood and considered. Everyone concerned must keep an open mind during this stage to reach an acceptable solution.

The agreement must be made clear so that both sides know what has been decided.

## Stage 6: Implementation

Once an agreement has been agreed upon, the next step is to implement a course of action to carry out the decision.





**Note:**

If an agreement cannot be reached during a negotiation meeting, then the meeting must be rescheduled. This will help prevent the parties from getting into further arguments and heated discussions that are not only a waste of time but can also damage future relationships.

At the subsequent negotiation meeting, the same steps must be followed. New ideas and interests must be considered, and the situation must be looked at afresh. It might help to find other options and even bring in a new mediator/negotiator who can look at the whole situation from a different standpoint.



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# Chapter 4: Negotiation Skills and Tactics for everyone at the Workplace

Negotiations are a part of everyday work life. Your negotiation skills benefit not only you but also those you work with – your colleagues and employer as well. Negotiation is an art. If you are curious about how to negotiate, learning its skills and tactics will help. They will come handy the next time you need it at the workplace.

## Negotiation Skills

### Be prepared

Never get into a negotiating meeting without being prepared. With no context, no amount of negotiating skills will help you. Gather all the background information you can get so you go into the negotiation meeting fully aware of what you are negotiating, who you will be negotiating with and the kind of people they are.





## Be a good listener

Emotions tend to run high during negotiation meetings, and you might find yourself in a situation where people are talking over each other. This kind of aggressive approach can have adverse effects. Miscommunications can arise from such behavior. Instead, try active listening. Ask questions, and clarify what the other party has to say. Watch for body language signals. Rather than getting into a shouting match with the opposing side, you will gain more by listening to them attentively.

## Be dispassionate

Show that you are always in control. Emotional outbursts might seem fine at the time, but they do nothing for your cause. Instead these outbursts show the other party that you are not in control. Once they know you are not in control, they have an advantage over you. Emotional outbursts also end up with you conceding to a solution that you are not happy with or might even disrupt the entire negotiation process.





## Communicate

One of the most reliable skills necessary during the negotiation process is communication. You must be able to get your message, your viewpoint, and your thoughts across to the other party clearly and effectively. Poor communication will only result in miscommunication, further complications in the negotiation process, and lead to unresolved conflicts.

## Collaboration

Negotiations are not always one party against another. It is more of a type of “collaboration,” where both the parties who have different view meet to find a mutually beneficial solution. Good collaboration skills will help you work together with the other party and make the entire negotiation process less combative. Most importantly, it will foster good relationships between you and the other party and help you both reach a mutual solution.





## Negotiation Tactics

Never get into a negotiating meeting without being prepared. With no context, no amount of negotiating skills will help you. Gather all the background information you can get so you go into the negotiation meeting fully aware of what you are negotiating, who you will be negotiating with and the kind of people they are.



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### **Don't think in terms of winning**

Negotiations are not about winning, nor are they competitions - they are about reaching a mutual solution. If you go into a negotiation believing that you must win, then you have already lost. Instead, walk into a negotiation prepared to work out the best possible solution for both your interests as well as the other party's interests.

### **Think of the other person**

It's not merely about being empathetic. If you can help the other person, understand what they need, what they value, and what is important to them,



as



well as what their objectives and goals are, then you know what to put on the table. You will know how much you are willing to give in to reach a mutually acceptable solution.

### **Don't assume. Clarify.**

Don't walk into a negotiation with preconceived ideas of what the other party wants. At the same time, you might not have an opportunity to find out what the other party wants and what their motives are. So, begin your negotiation meeting by asking what their motivations are and stating what your motivations are. You both must be on the same page before the meeting progresses, and you must get rid of preconceived notions that might be false.

### **Don't make threats**

When emotions run high – like they often do during negotiations, you are more likely to threaten to walk away from the situation or issue an ultimatum that will bring all hopes of a decent discussion to an end. Stay professional. Remember, at all times, that you are in the workplace and that you have to work with these people. Burning your bridges will only make the situation worse for you.





## CONCLUSION

Good negotiations are necessary because they contribute a lot to business success and build better relations. The aim of any negotiation is not to get one's way, but to reach an agreement that has mutual benefits. It's about leaving both parties satisfied and willing to work in harmony in the future. A negotiating mindset benefits everyone – the organization, the employers, as well as the employees. Having strong negotiation skills can help you reach a beneficial compromise rather than end up with a loss.

It's true that negotiations are not easy, but with the right tools and skills, you can ensure a win-win outcome.



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## A few books that we recommend:

