

The Art of Great Negotiation!

Wendy Munt gives her top tips for getting the best deals...

I think of negotiation as something of a 'game of life' - whether we're conscious of it or not, we're negotiating all of the time - with family, friends, partners, colleagues... BUT, just because we all do it, doesn't necessarily mean we do it well. A great negotiator is someone who is determined to negotiate the best possible deal and will calmly walk away from a bad one.

How well do you think you negotiate now?
How good a listener are you?
How do you approach a difficult negotiation?
How do you react when negotiations get heated?
What is your body language shouting about how you're feeling?



GET TOUGH! Yes, whatever your gender, 'Grow some balls!'

Contrary to what some of you might think having done a few rounds in the 'negotiation ring' with me, i'm not saying get your boxing gloves on here, no, far from it! Always stick to the 'game rules' of not being aggressive, loud or rude and your 'opponent' won't think ill of you for fighting for the best possible deal. In fact, they'll respect you for it. Conversely, lose your cool and it'll work against you, weakening your position with every raging second...

'TALK LESS, LISTEN MORE'

Taking notes forces the discipline of doing exactly that and cleverly wins you time to consider your response rather than jumping in and possibly regretting it later. Don't feel the need to fill a silence - a silence can shout so loudly. Use this powerful tool to make your 'opponent' feel uncomfortable and hopefully pressure them into giving something away - be it information or a better offer that gets you closer to where you want to be.

KEEP YOUR COOL Never let the opposition think they're getting to you (even though you might want to explode!). I find an exaggerated

smile works wonders at confusing the 'opposition' as to what 'game' you're up to! Giving polite, calm responses gives the impression you're coolly in control even if you're really raging inside.

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER - Prepare and research thoroughly and it'll pay off bigtime. Don't do it and it's likely to cost you everything. Clever, subtle probing and active listening will gain you respect, lower your opponent's defensive guard and build your strength of knowledge of what they're seeking to achieve. The more 'information ammo' you have, the more you can use it in the negotiation 'battle'.

READ THE SIGNS - Be aware of all the non-verbal clues that your opposition is giving, both deliberately and inadvertently. They can be every bit as powerful as what's being said so watch out for those nervous twitches, forced coughs and uncomfortable shifting in their seats!

GET CREATIVE - Learn how to quickly identify what it is that you have and what your opposition so badly wants. What tiny sprats can you offer up in order to catch a fat, juicy mackerel!?! Learn the art of cleverly taking something that

costs you 'nothing' and dressing it up to look like you're giving the world and more.

KNOW WHEN AND HOW TO CLOSE THE DEAL

- Allowing a negotiation to drag on unnecessarily or run round in circles can lead to a weaker end result as a compromise is eventually made, or no agreement is reached at all. Be focussed on what you want and go for it!

REVIEW, LISTEN AND LEARN - How did you do? Did you get what you set out to achieve? What would you do differently? Encourage feedback of fellow colleagues who observed the meeting...and keep your cool even if you don't like or agree with what they say!

Next Month's Toy Town Titan

Wendy talks about what makes a great **activity** toy...

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