10-Step Guide for Negotiating Like a Pro

BEFORE THE NEGOTIATION

1. Use the Ackerman model to set your target. Remember, your counterpart should be the first to say a number.
   a. My target is ______________________________________________________________
   b. 95% of my target is ________________________________________________________
   c. 85% of my target is ________________________________________________________
   d. 65% of my target is ________________________________________________________

2. My counterpart’s negotiation style (check appropriate boxes):
   □ Analyst
   □ Accommodator
   □ Assertive

3. Prepare three to five labeling statements. Label any obstacles that may prevent agreement and clear those first. This shows you’ve thought about the discussion from your counterpart’s perspective.
   a. It seems like ____________________________________________________________ is valuable to you.
   b. It seems like you don’t like _____________________________________________.
   c. It seems like __________________________________________________________ makes it easier.
   d. It seems like you’re reluctant to ____________________________________________.
   e. ________________________________________________________________________.
   f. ________________________________________________________________________.
   g. ________________________________________________________________________.

4. Prepare three to five calibrated questions. Open-ended “how” and “what” questions help give your counterpart a sense of control:
   a. How can we solve this problem?
   b. What is the next step to take?
   c. What is the highest priority here?
   d. How can I support you?
   e. ________________________________________________________________________?
   f. ________________________________________________________________________?
   g. ________________________________________________________________________?
DURING THE NEGOTIATION
5. Listen actively – that is, “listen” with all your senses – and show your counterpart they have your full attention.

6. Mirror your counterpart: By repeating crucial words they say, you can build a sense of mutual understanding and create natural pauses that help you control the flow of the negotiation.

7. Body language accounts for 55% of the negotiation – be aware of both yours and your counterpart’s. For example, touching their own face or suddenly crossing their arms might indicate that they’re uncomfortable.

CLOSING THE NEGOTIATION
Continue using calibrated questions until you get a “yes.” Then move on to next steps:
8. Have your counterpart reaffirm the agreement three times.

9. Identify all decision-making parties behind the scenes.

10. Get it in writing!

QUICK TIPS
- Be ready for surprises.
- Don’t commit to your assumptions.
- Focus on your counterpart.
- Don’t battle – discover.
- Take your time.
- Stay positive and humanize yourself.
- Never stop listening.

Sources:
Navarro J. (2008), What Every Body is Saying, William Morrow Paperbacks.

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