

The Psychology of Negotiation

Perfect negotiation, from the opening handshake to the closing agreement, is the ability to master the fine art of persuasion and recognizing opportunity. It is the process by which we define the terms of what we want. Implicit in this setting is "give me some of what I want and I will give you some of what you want."

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Head to head negotiating must be approached with focused mental preparation. Not to be entered into lightly, it is a battle of wits which demands that we determine where the value lies for us, as well as for the other side. We can negotiate from a position of strength by assessing the total picture, the culture and personalities

of the negotiators, the issues at stake, and the pivotal circumstances.

Effective negotiation requires skill; groundwork, control, concentration, talent, and opportunity. We must select, define and prioritize our wishes, all the while remaining flexible in our approach. The central question to any negotiation setting is, knowing what you and your opponent want. If we define our settlement criteria ahead of time, we place ourselves in a position of strength.

We must also identify the priorities of our counterpart and look for compromises on the least resistive subjects. If these items are insignificant to us, we can score a win by conceding these to the other side and make him feel like he has won the battle, when in reality, we will ultimately win the war. Rest assured, it is merely a matter of perception. For a negotiation to be truly successful, it must be a win-win proposition. This is the key to the psychology of powerful negotiating.

by Paul Just