

THE NEGOTIATION SKILLS OF SOLOMON

By Ken Sande

Look out for the interests of others.

1. We negotiate constantly ... but not always effectively
2. Cooperative vs. competitive negotiation
 - Competing is appropriate in some cases (e.g., urgent matters, moral issues), but it often neglects underlying problems and needs, results in inadequate solutions, is inefficient, and damages relationships
 - Cooperating (Matt. 22:39; Phil. 2:3-4)
Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others (Phil. 2:3-4; see Matt. 7:12; 1 Cor. 10:24).

Love . . . is not self-seeking (1 Cor. 13:4-5; see Matt. 22:39).
 - When you need to negotiate, PAUSE.
Be as shrewd [prudent, sensible, and practically wise] as snakes and as innocent as doves (Matt. 10:16).

Biblical negotiation combines love and righteousness with wisdom

P _____
A _____ relationships
U _____ interests
S _____ for creative solutions
E _____ options objectively and reasonably

3. Prepare
The wisdom of the prudent is to give thought to their ways. . . . Those who plan what is good find love and faithfulness (Prov. 14:8, 22).
 - Pray
 - Get the facts
 - Study the Bible
 - Seek godly counsel
 - Pick a good time and place
 - Anticipate reactions, plan opening remarks
4. Affirm relationships (Phil. 2:1-4; Luke 6:27-28; Rom. 12:20-21)
To "affirm relationships" means to show genuine respect for another person, concern for his or her interests, and a desire to protect and preserve your relationship.
 - Communicate in a respectful manner
 - Spend time on personal issues
 - Exercise authority with restraint
 - Submit to authority
 - Earnestly seek to understand
 - Confront in a gracious manner
 - Allow face saving
 - Give sincere praise and thanks

5. Understand interests.

- Issue - identifiable and concrete questions that must be addressed in order to reach an agreement; tend to be tangible, measurable, and set the agenda for negotiation; may be either personal issues or material/substantive issues
- Position - a desired outcome or definable perspective on an issue
- Interest - what really motivates people; something that a person values; a concern, desire, need, or limitation; sometimes concrete, but often abstract. Must be addressed in order to reach truly satisfactory agreement.

Key insights

- Positions tend to be mutually exclusive and incompatible
- Interests are the reasons behind positions
- Interests are more easily dovetailed than positions
- Abigail: the consummate negotiator (1 Sam. 25: 32-35).
- The better you understand others' interests (as well as your own), the more likely you are to develop acceptable solutions.

6. Search for creative solutions (Prov. 14:8; Dan. 1:11-13).

- When brainstorming, separate inventing from deciding.
- Expand the "pie" (discover additional interests and develop ways to meet them).

7. Evaluate options objectively and reasonably (evaluate, don't argue).

- "Objectively" means not based on personal feelings or prejudice, but on facts and unbiased assessments (e.g., Scripture, standards that are legitimate for both sides, verifiable or measurable facts, written documents, opinions of trusted advisors or neutral experts, regulations or statutes, precedent).
- "Reasonably" means in accord with sound judgment as compared to being irrational or groundless (e.g., keep focus on issues and facts; encourage specificity; use honest; clarifying questions; not rhetorical or argumentative; look for hidden offers, contingent offers, admissions; note small positive steps and agreements; build momentum; look behind others' positions and deal wisely with their objections and criticisms).
- If you bog down on substance, negotiate on *process* (see Dan. 1:11-16).

Further study:

- *The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict* www.rw360.org/bookstore
- Subscribe to RW blog at www.rw360.org/blog
- Download the *RW360 Smartphone App* (www.rw360.org/app)
- Online training in relational wisdom at www.rw-academy.org (50% coupon: "hmschl50")