

8 Essential Traits of Great Negotiators



So what is negotiation?

Negotiation is a dialogue between two or more people or parties intended to reach a **beneficial outcome** over one or more issues where a conflict exists with respect to at least one of these issues. This beneficial outcome can be for all parties involved or just one of them.

Opportunities come from knocking on doors until they open.

Trait 1.... Preparation. Before anything else, preparation is the key. We have all heard the term **prior preparation prevents poor performance**. It's a fact. When you fail to prepare, you prepare to fail. Some things you need to prepare are the results you want to achieve, concessions you will make and give and the Best Alternatives To A Negotiation Agreement (BATNA).

Trait 2... Listening skills. Competent negotiators use one mouth and two ears when actively listening to the other party. A skill you must learn when actively listening to someone is the use of the words **I'll just make a note of that**. This shows that you are interested, empathetic and professional. These notes that you take can be used as a great closing tool at the end of your negotiation. The more that you write down things the less you have to remember.

Trait 3...Reading body language. With body language making up the major part of communication, it's essential you not only observe but know how to read body language signals from the person you are negotiating with. Whether it's a head nod, changing in position of their legs when sitting, rubbing their nose, putting their hands in their pockets or folding their arms, we must know how to read correctly these important non-verbal signals. They hold the key to you having the power in many negotiations. **Must read...**Body Language by Allan Pease. Brilliant book on the subject Body Language.

Trait 4....Confidence. Your body language is critical when wanting to exhibit an air of confidence. The way that you meet the other party, your attire, interact and how and where you position yourself can affect your power of confidence.

Trait 5.... Patience. *Good things come to those who wait...* Fact. Whenever we rush anything, we normally achieve a poorer result. The most successful negotiations are those which are well considered, timely and creative.

When asked what the basic secret to closing sales was, World No 1 Sales Trainer, the late **J. DOUGLAS EDWARDS** said *“Guts! It’s simply having enough guts to get in there and fight for the close.”*

Trait 6.... Stamina. Some negotiations end when one party just gives up. Don’t let that be you. We must learn that when we give up too soon, too often or too early, we fail to get the result we want. We must learn to hang in there as long as we can when needed.

Trait 7....Show Empathy. Empathy is the ability to understand, be aware of and sensitive to others’ feelings, needs, priorities thoughts, experiences, and negotiation position. The person you are negotiating with will be a lot more sensitive, receptive and understanding when empathy is an integral part of your negotiation. Many people think the number one quality of a negotiator is **empathy**. Many say it all comes down to how well you see the world the way that they are seeing it.

Trait 8....Never take it personally. So often we fail to separate our work life from our personal life. When entering a business negotiation, this is business. You often will feel frustrated, misled, let down, upset and angry when things aren’t going your way.

This is normal. As are the feelings of joy, happiness, exhilaration, optimism and fulfilment when you achieve a successful negotiation. You must learn and practice to detach yourself emotionally and not take things personally. This is an important lesson.

Remember ...In negotiation, the impossible is often the untried! Be creative. Be successful!

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