

# The collaborative negotiation flashcard



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The collaborative negotiation A collaborative negotiation is where parties desire, and work towards achieving, a mutually beneficial outcome. In some cases this can mean reaching a “ win/win” result. In a collaborative negotiation there is a greater focus on the genuine interests of the parties, rather than posturing or point scoring. In a collaborative negotiation, the parties will better understand each other’s interests. For example, A computer distributor approaches a Chinese supplier to tender for the supply of part “ A” which it requires as a component part of its computing product.

The distributor has approached this supplier because of its reputation for quality and because (unknown to the supplier) it wishes to enter the local market as a distributor. The supplier has a large amount of excess capacity and, unknown to the distributor, is also capable of manufacturing component parts “ B” and “ C” which could form part of the distributor’s product. In the example, the genuine interests of the distributor go beyond securing a supply of part “ A”, as it wishes to break into the new market.

The supplier’s genuine interest may be to have the opportunity to supply the other components “ B” and “ C” and secure a long-term relationship with the distributor. In collaborative negotiation, the approach is to treat the relationship as an important and valuable element. Win/Win In collaborative negotiation, it is assumed that the pie can be enlarged by finding things of value to both parties, thus creating a win-win situation where both parties can leave the table feeling that they have gained something of value.

Fair process As humans we have a deep need for fairness, and when this does not happen, even if we emerge as winners from a competitive

negotiation, the result is not truly satisfying. The most comfortable result from a negotiation happens when our needs are met, including the need for fairness. Joint problem-solving The collaborative approach to negotiation seeks to convert individual wants into a single problem and to bring both parties together to work on solving this problem.

By converting individual positions and wants into separated problems, the people can be freed up from jealous and personal attachment to their requirements so they can then take a more objective and equitable position from which they can act in a more collaborative way. Collaborative strategy Being collaborative does not mean being weak and giving in. On the contrary, a collaborative approach seeks to gain the best possible solution. Being collaborative Quite often, the genuine interests of the parties are not immediately apparent but can be revealed through actively listening and encouraging open dialogue.

In a collaborative negotiation it is important to try to understand the short and longer term needs and aspirations of the other party. Once these are understood, the parties can consider if and how their genuine interests coincide and start to consider creative solutions to achieve a mutually beneficial result. Methods of collaboration There are many different ways of achieving collaboration within a negotiation. ·Relationship building. A collaborative negotiation will only exist if the relationship is right and there is an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect.

It is important that time is invested into building the relationship and setting the right tone. This might, for instance, include friendly preliminaries to a

discussion and establishing legitimacy. ·Openness. Whilst it is important to judge the situation carefully and not reveal important information inappropriately, it is also true that if you demonstrate a degree of openness, this is more likely to be reciprocated and can help foster an atmosphere of trust and collaboration. ·Identify common ground. Time spent listening can be invaluable in identifying where the common ground lies.

Once common ground has been identified, it is worth highlighting where it exists. This common ground can then be used as the first building block for developing a mutually beneficial solution. Do not be tempted to rush into making a proposal, time spent understanding the other party's concerns is often invaluable in reaching solutions. ·Long-term view. It may be that a particular problem, which has been difficult to resolve, seems bigger than it really is until it is considered with a longer term perspective. Framing the negotiation in the longer term can also help ensure the final deal stands the test of time. Creativity and problem solving. The more time spent considering the alternatives to a problem, the greater the likelihood of avoiding an impasse on specific issues. If a problem appears insurmountable, is it impossible to change the problem? Consider areas where value can be created. Also consider what “ packages” involving concessions and advantages can be created and offered. ·Using empathy. Empathizing and being sensitive to another party's position can be a highly effective method of persuading them that your requirements are also reasonable and well founded.

Consider starting from their position and building a bridge to a point that satisfies both your requirements. One of the key benefits of this approach

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will be that they will feel you have listened and that you are genuinely trying to reach a mutually satisfactory solution. References: Wilmot, W. & Hocker, J.

(2010), *Interpersonal Conflict*. 8th ed. McGraw-Hill, New York. Retrieved from: [http://changingminds.org/disciplines/negotiation/styles/collaborative\\_negotiation.htm](http://changingminds.org/disciplines/negotiation/styles/collaborative_negotiation.htm)

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