

# Sally: opera and negotiation essay sample



The fundamental assumption is that learning and practicing negotiation skills can be learned. Others, however, assume that diplomacy and negotiation are things that can never be learned or taught. They believe that you are either born a negotiator or you are not. Unfortunately, this is a very shortsighted assumption. The approach to this will be to use all the information that was provided in the analysis to determine the best position of strategy to save the Opera on opening day, to find a fiscal solution that will benefit both the Opera and Sally using a BATNA strategy. The conflict is defined in this scenario is the immediate need of the opera company needing an experienced soprano for opening night in 3 weeks versus an aging soprano who would like to get her career back on track. Sally was the lead soprano in the past; however, this was during the prime of her career 4 years ago. Sally has been offered little work or lead roles in recent times. The Lyric is in a difficult position because the former lead is no longer available, and the secondary soprano is inexperienced.

This might be an opportunity for Sally to get back on top of the Opera world. BATNA (Best Alternative to Negotiated Agreement), which is a point of selection in the stage of preparation for negotiation; that is not fixed and can be improved. Before entering into this negotiation the business manager should know what the worst-case scenario is he fails to reach an agreement. As the business manager you have two worst-case scenarios. The first being that you would have to pay Sally \$45, 000, which is the most that you have been authorized to pay for her services. The second is that you would have to use the young inexperienced soprano in the event Sally would not be able to reach an agreement with the Lyric. Sally's worst case is that she will be

out of work. In the twilight of her career this could be her last shot at making a comeback. The business manager will have to use that position to his advantage. The next stage in using a BATNA strategy is to determine the better and the best alternative. The more leverage and power one has the better the chances during the negotiation process.

The best position for the business manager would be would to offer Sally a raise from her \$12, 500 she received for last year's secondary role to a rate of \$25, 000. The normal policy identified in the outline is two times the secondary roles salary. This year's salary for the secondary soprano is \$14, 000. Offering \$25, 000 would exceed her pay of last year, and would remain under the two times salary of \$14, 000 being offered to the secondary role during this year's production. This should not be the initial offer because you want to create value. Creation of value can mean adding to that which is subject to negotiation or meeting your interests better. Sometimes people create value well but then do not know how to claim it. The goal of the business manager would be to create enough value that at the correct point of the negotiation Sally feels like she received the most value and is satisfied with the final result. Since the information is limited on what Sally's position is, the business manager will need to place himself in her shoes.

Sally wants another opportunity to prove her abilities. She is probably aware that the normal rate is two times the secondary singers role rate. She knows she was not invited to audition. She is also aware that the Lyric is in a difficult position and needs a star of her quality that knows Bellini's Norma. Her negotiation stance should be to hold out for as much as she can. The best case as defined by BATNA would be somewhere in the \$30, 000 dollar

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range. Another important role of BATNA is information: how much do we share and when? Sharing a lot of information early might not serve our negotiation interest well because others might claim value from you. You have to know how much information you should share and when to share it.

If you do not share any information then the other side does not know anything about your interests and cannot meet them. If you share a weak BATNA, this might be manipulated if you are not very assertive. The first strategy would be to inquire as to why Sally asked for the meeting with the business manager. This would place her in the defensive position and would allow her to define her needs early in the process. Once she identifies her requirements you can work forward starting to focus on options that meet both of your interests fairly. The goal of this would be to eliminate the problem of choosing between two things. It is not a good idea to reveal your minimum position if the other person needs to feel she has worked hard to reach it. The other person may need to feel he or she has worked very hard to move you to your position.