



***Improve your
negotiation skills***

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I. INTRODUCTION

Negotiation is a way for two or more parties who start from different positions to try to agree on something. Negotiation involves communication between the parties seeking to find some common ground. Sometimes exchanges occur that are described as negotiation but are not actually negotiation at all since one or both of the parties is not actually interested in finding a jointly agreed solution, or in changing their position. One side may be pretending to negotiate for political or any of several other reasons, but not be prepared to offer anything. What leads particular sides to be willing to negotiate is something we will not cover. We will be looking at what happens when they are. Hopefully that will help you to be able to identify when the other side is insincere.

Many people have learned what they know of negotiation from doing it: experience is frequently the main training ground for many of us. However as with most important activities a good appreciation of the factors involved means you are better able to be prepared and less likely to be tricked into accepting something you do not want. You need to be clear about what you want and the process by which you are going to get it. Mistakes can be very damaging.

This means it is a stressful process. The negotiation can make decisions that affect many members for a long time to come. This means you carry a lot of responsibility both individually and collectively. Also the other side is likely to use a variety of tactics to distract you and get you to make mistakes – for example trying to make you confused, angry, intimidated, and/or unsure of your own knowledge. This can be in negotiation at all levels, and the thought that at the end of the negotiations the other side has somehow been more successful than you is always a threat. In truth you will never really know - even the fact that the other side will not know either does not lift the weight of your decisions.

Labour/management relationships have become more complex in recent times: negotiations are now rarely simple processes about simple issues. Sometimes formal procedures govern particular negotiation, and not knowing these would make it difficult for you to play a productive role. Just relying on previous experience may not be enough because your previous experience may not have been like what you are about to be involved in. It is very likely those on the other side of the negotiation table have experience and also some training in this area. To be able to deal with them effectively you need to be trained too – why let them have all the advantages?

This brochure aims to get you to consider the following:

- What is involved in the process of negotiation
- How you currently approach negotiation
- How the other side might approach negotiation
- What you can do differently

There are no complete answers to the topic of negotiation: we cannot wave a magic wand and turn you into the best in the world. Importantly there is no –one-size-fits-all solution: every case must be addressed individually on its merits. All this short brochure can do is to give you some pointers about how to look at your own practice and seek to learn from it. It can be hard work and it requires a degree of self honesty which can be demanding, but the potential gain is worth it.

II. DEFINITION

What does it mean?

- To “negotiate”: To confer with view to finding terms of agreement. To arrange. To bring about (desired result).
- “Negotiation”: The act or procedure of negotiating

Aspects of Negotiation

- A process of exchange
- A process of influencing
- A process of changing a relationship
- A means of getting things achieved
- An outcome-oriented doing process
- A process where sides with conflicting aims decide how they will cooperate
- Communication with a specific purpose
- A group of skills which once identified can be learned through practice

Scope:

If you think through everything you are involved in during the day you are unlikely to identify a single day involving no negotiation of any form: you are doing it continuously, even though you may not be aware of it. We are all familiar with the times we sit across a table from our opposite numbers but we should also be aware of the time we discuss with our colleagues who is going to do what, in our union or in our workplaces. Negotiation might also happen when buying or selling [for example think about buying or selling a car or a house] or arranging delivery or collection of things you have bought. It also happens at home. On reflection you may discover that you do most of your negotiation with your spouse, children, parents, and/or wider family. Family arrangements, children’s education, their welfare or dealing with particular members – all these can take on the features of full-blown negotiations. You may also feel that at times these are more complex than any negotiations you do elsewhere!

III. PREPARATION OF THE NEGOTIATION

1. General preparations for negotiating

Prior to the negotiations, it is important you develop a clear view about a range of issues that should then determine your choice of strategies.

a) Balance of power

In any negotiating situation, the power of each side influences the outcome. Employers who can swiftly move their activity to another country may be less dependent on you than the other way around. However, if you have high membership amongst highly skilled workers who are hard to replace, your power is considerably bigger. Normally this will have its impact on what is realistic to expect from the negotiations. You must be honest in assessing your power and not overestimate your own strength. – However, what you tell to the other side is a different thing.

A way to assess your power is to compare the opponent's cost to reject your offer with the cost of accepting it: your power is the difference between both costs. Likewise, their power is your cost to reject their offer compared with your cost to accept it. It shows that your power always relates to the other side: your power depends upon its impact on the opponent. It depends on how they perceive your power and therefore you have to put yourself in their position to get a good idea of your own power. Be aware that this is no science but only an informed guess, so make sure your information is correct.

b) Possible alliances and leverages

Another aspect of the power relationship relates to any external relationship that may have an impact on the negotiations. Are other unions affected by the content of these negotiations? If so, can you gain their support, or at least come to an agreement they will not act in any way that undermines your position? Similarly, is there any political or other support you can call upon to support your cause? Do you have for example contact with media that sympathise with you and can offer positive media coverage? All this can provide additional pressure which enhances your power.

c) Time schedule

How long will it take to prepare the negotiations? How long will it take to negotiate? How long will it take you to get the appropriate mandates? Are there any absolute deadlines? Once you have identified all stages of the negotiation process, prepare a time schedule that marks the different activities, dates and the responsible persons for each activity. Additionally, appoint someone who is in charge to make sure that adequate progress is being made.

d) Available information on the opponent

How sure are you about the opponent's motivation and intentions? Is the general information you have about them sufficient, in a format you can use, ready to distribute to whoever needs it? Who will fill possible gaps in your data? What are useful sources? Do you have all necessary information about your own position?

e) The two main negotiation styles

Will the negotiation be a collaborative process [sometimes called cooperative bargaining, or win/win] where both sides work together towards a commonly agreed outcome or will it be a competitive process [sometimes called distributive bargaining, or win/lose] where both sides compete and each side focuses on maximising their gains? This is likely to depend upon your shared past, your relationship with the opponent, especially in the context of previous negotiations. However, it is always advisable to keep both strategies in mind as things may not proceed as planned.

f) How to start negotiating?

Who is going to open the negotiations? When you are not clear on what their position is, or think it may have changed, it is advisable to let them start, otherwise you may be addressing out-dated issues. If, however, you are clear about their position, you can get straight to the core and

make your case, putting the focus on the main points according to your point of view. You should also consider the order in which the agenda items are to be handled: you may consider starting with uncontroversial items, which could be easily resolved, and thus create a good atmosphere to continue. Alternatively, you may feel there are real issues of difference and you need to focus on these items immediately since it might take a lot of time to find a compromise.

2. Specific preparations for negotiating

It is sometimes said that failing to plan means planning to fail. This can also be said of preparation for negotiations. The time spent on preparing may often be more than that spent on the negotiations themselves. As the stakes are high it is important that you prepare appropriately – it is your investment in the outcome.

Additionally it is not something you do and then stick to it whatever. Any plan is only a plan and if it is not working then you should look again: flexibility and thinking on your feet are skills which are especially important as things develop. At each new piece of information or where things have not gone according to plan you should regroup and reconsider: you may want to change your mind entirely about how best to proceed. The better prepared you are the more chance you have to change course when required.

In general what you need to sort out in advance can be grouped in some broad categories. Exactly the details of your preparations will depend upon your circumstances and there may be items not included in the following. Use this only as a guide and consult to identify whether there are more boxes that need to be ticked in advance.

a) Your position

- What you want
- Your opening position
- Your 'resistance point'
- The strengths and weaknesses of your case
- The arguments for your position
- What you can trade and what you want in exchange

b) Their position

- What they are likely to want
- The strengths and weaknesses of their position
- Their arguments for their case

c) Your team

- Your individual skills and experience
- Your team roles
- Team signals
- Your 'rules of engagement'
- Who sits where?

d) Their team

- What do we know about them?
- How are they likely to present themselves?

Also you should consider the history of negotiations to date – how have they been and what lessons can you draw.

What you want...

The usual pattern in negotiations is that both sides start out with positions that they expect to soften in order to reach an agreement. This means that the opening offer by both sides is not what either expects to achieve. If you were bargaining with a seller for a carpet you wouldn't make your first offer the maximum you intend to pay, otherwise there is nowhere for you to move to. To pursue the analogy, your maximum is your 'resistance point', what you would prefer to pay is your target, and what you first offer is your opening position.

The difference between the opening position and the resistance point is known as the bargaining range: if you stick to your position, a settlement is only possible within these limits.

Sometimes the negotiations have been called in response to some events involving demands and it may be that some of this has been already chosen for you. You may be entering with an initial position already publicly stated. That does not however mean that you cannot enter showing some degree of flexibility. Whether that is an appropriate step is for you to decide in the full knowledge of the context. However some negotiators prefer to work backwards. In this approach the concept of *BATNA* may be useful.

BATNA stands for the Best Alternative To a Negotiated Agreement. It refers to what is the best you might reasonable hope for if negotiations failed. If these discussions got nowhere, then assuming business carries on, what is the feasible future, which is most favourable to your side. Whatever it is, you do not want to concede in negotiations to something which is worse: you do not want to agree to something which is worse than what you might get anyway. You may consider setting your bottom line at your *BATNA* or above¹.

Having established your resistance point by this or other means you need to identify your target: what do we want that is actually possible?

The next step is to decide what your opening position is going to be.

Your opening position is just as it were a finger in the wind: you are seeing what response it provokes in them and it is a starting point, but not one which you expect to get. Do not set it very close to what you actually want as this gives you little room for manoeuvre. Stating your opening position is often referred to as 'anchoring' – you are being attached to a point from which you cannot subsequently move away.

It is likely that the other side will likewise have a bargaining range. There is only a possibility of settlement if the two bargaining ranges overlap: this is called the potential settlement area. However, just because there is such an overlap, this does not necessarily mean an agreement will be reached. Negotiators who are unskilled may not recognise or identify the potential settlement area and so may fail to reach an acceptable outcome. Additionally where there is an overlap this does not mean any settlement which is achieved will be at the middle point, ie half way between each of the resistance points. The skilled negotiators are those who seek to make the outcome fall as close to their target as possible, to the detriment of the other side.

Part of your preparation is to try to think yourself into your opponents' position and guess what their bargaining range is. You will only ever know for sure [unless you have particular intelligence] what they have told you, and the last thing they said is the best information you have as to their current position.

Again it is important to note that your bargaining range also is a plan: depending upon the progress of the negotiations you may think it wise to revise it.

¹ After Fisher & Ury

The force of your position

You might wish to break your thoughts about this into three parts:

Think about this in terms of what causes you to change your direction or position – the other side is likely to be similarly motivated. Often you will do something if:

- Doing it has clear benefits
- Not doing it has undesirable results
- It really is the best course of action

These can be characterised as the carrots, sticks, and strengths of your position. After stating what you want in negotiations, these are the reasons your demands should be conceded.

- **Carrots:**

What carrots are on offer? Identify all the benefits that flow from your position. Obviously it helps that these are presented in the most favourable light.

- **Sticks:**

These cover what could happen if agreement is not reached – if you end in deadlock. Identify all the negative consequences and again these should be presented in the most unfavourable light.

- **Strengths:**

What evidence do you have for your position? Why is it a wise choice for them to agree with you? In what way are they obliged to come along, and how can you show that really they do not have a choice? Sometimes looking at your position will highlight the need to obtain further information – eg some research is needed to track down the particular comparative data. Ensure this is passed to appropriate support and/or delegated within your team.

From this list, for each heading identify the 3 or 4 strongest points and have that to hand for your negotiations. When stating these you will probably not want to get bogged down in detail immediately but make the main point: you can always come back to particular points and amplify later. Having already made the notes above you should be able to have a fairly good idea of what you would want to say to support your position. With these in mind prepare a position statement which summarises where you stand. Again make this brief: a clear and concise statement which leaves no doubt about the main things you are asking for.

Defensive preparation

It is advisable to look at your case and think through the potential weaknesses in discussion. What are the other side likely to say? By this means you can start to identify how you will defend your position so that you will be ready for their responses.

Additionally what are their carrots and sticks? What compelling arguments will they deploy? The more you can put yourselves in their shoes the more you can anticipate their moves and be ready for them.

IV. The overall approach to negotiations

There are two main styles of negotiations:

1. Competitive/Adversarial Styles (Or Positional Bargaining)

This approach starts from opposition: the parties at the negotiating table have opposing interests and therefore the purpose is to defeat the other side. Positional bargainers are focussed on winning which means the other side must end up losing. They will try to get the most for their side irrespective of the other side and may approach the process in an air of suspicion and adversity, sometimes even hostility. They will not seek to create any atmosphere of trust – this is a contest of wills and the strongest prevail – and there will be little openness regarding their situation, or no real appreciation of the other's position. Threats may be common and they may seem insincere, manipulative and divisive. They are more likely to engage in tactics aimed at disruption and confusion.

Such an approach is often the tradition in union and management negotiations, where a background of poor industrial relations has often emphasised opposition. There are soft and hard positional bargainers, depending upon how willing they are to offer concessions and compromise, trust each other, and explore possibilities, but as hard bargainers tend to prevail over the soft, the hard approach tends to be more common.

2. Cooperative/Problem-Solving (Or Principled Bargaining)

This approach starts from the position of a shared problem: that both sides are faced with an issue which requires a collective solution – you are in this together. Both sides appreciate the need for each other to gain something from the negotiation. The focus is on the problems not the sides or the people in the discussions, and the prevailing mood is one of being reasonable: people are reasonable with each other and appeal to reason to solve difficulties. There is an air of openness and information is shared readily to ensure everyone has the complete picture in order to address the main issues: underlying interests will be explored by both sides and there is a willingness to look at matters from both sides. Identifying exactly what would work as a satisfactory outcome for each side is an important step in this: preferably measurable against an agreed set of criteria. The disposition is one of seeking a creative solution which will meet the criteria: what can we do to solve this which allows us to get most of what we want and you to get most of what you want also. This is known as win/win

Aspects of Cooperative bargaining get sometimes confused with soft positional bargaining: what is the difference? The main difference is in the framing of the discussion. Soft bargaining tends to be around what is to be traded for what – a kind of market transaction between buyer and seller where the two parties are polite to each other. However Principled bargaining has more of a team work aspect: you are working together to solve collective problems

3. Can you be Principled while they are not?

Being able to adopt a Principled style does not depend on the position of the other side, but it helps if they want to do so. You may have some indication of their approach from previous negotiations and other dealings and if this is not their style you may want to send out signals that this is what you would prefer. You might point out that all the research indicates it is the best approach for all...

If you enter negotiations and it is clear you are dealing with positional bargainers, maintain your principled stance: there are three ways you may get them to change.

- It is possible you will win them over simply by the eminent sense of your approach: it has been described as 'contagious'

- Do not rise to their attacks but refocus their comments onto the problems at hand. Try and get them to explain their positions and how what they have offered will meet their needs. Invite them to elaborate on their criticisms of your statements with respect to the problem at hand: always bring things back to the issues, not the sides, and keep emphasising the collective interest.
- Ask for an impartial third party to become involved. This person can confidentially ask each side about their underlying interests, make a list and share it with the other side for comment as a catalyst to further discussion. The third party may progress to make actual proposals that address both sides' needs that again may be discussed. [this third option may be a little ambitious for some settings]

4. Bargaining style and settlement area

In positional bargaining, where the offers on each side gradually come closer together this is often referred to as 'bracketing'. For example where an opening employer offer is 1% and the union demand is 7%, when the employer moves to 2% and the union to 6%, and then 2.5% and 5.5% respectively, this is bracketing: the likely outcome to bracketing is a mid point – in this example around 4%. It is dangerous in this scenario to suggest at an early stage that this is the likely outcome as it suggests that such a figure is acceptable to your side, which allows the other side to propose that they never aimed at 4%, rather 2.5% is their maximum, and hence they propose to find a midpoint between that and 4% ie 3.25%. This is known as 'double bracketing' and provides a psychological edge to the side that employ it. The advantage falls to the person who makes the response, and in this case the union could have identified the mid point and attempted to double bracket the other side.

This scenario is far less likely to occur within a negotiation conducted via principled bargaining. The whole process of bracketing arises from not sharing information in the first place. If both sides have begun by being open about their respective positions then you already know what the targets are and hence the trickery in double bracketing is not possible.

V. The negotiating process

Negotiations tend to go through three stages – the opening, the middle, and the closing stages.

1. The opening stage

This is where the two sides set out their opening positions: where each side is going to start from. It is about information sharing and questions for clarification. The response from the other side to your proposals and/or to being questioned may reveal their disposition to the process. Also you will be able to see if your assumptions about the other side were borne out, and whether it looks as if there might be a possibility of an agreement – how far apart are the two sides at the start? It is important for your side to be clear in what you are presenting and to be confident in what you are saying.

2. The middle stage

This is where the negotiation starts: where you start to explore what the possibilities are and start to make tentative suggestions. Each side is testing the other. If this is positional bargaining then the likelihood is that it will go through ‘testing’ first - where each side probes the other side and makes its own case – followed by ‘movement’ where initial concessions and offers are made. Without movement, obviously a settlement cannot be reached. The shape of a possible settlement should become apparent in this stage if one is going to be realised at all.

If however this is principled bargaining, then this is where the two sides come together to look at the problem collectively. Information is shared and the key issues for both sides are explored. All parties try to engage with both sides of the arguments and identify or imagine possible solutions. In Principled bargaining this is a creative stage.

3. The closing stage

This is where the flesh is put onto the bones of what has been outlined as the basis for an agreement. In positional bargaining this is where the hard bargaining and tough talking may take place: what you must give if we agree to do *this*; *that* is not possible without XYZ. This can become quite tense as the need to make final decisions and concessions approaches: participants can show signs of stress. Finally the deal is made and it should be adequately recorded and agreed by both sides.

4. What comes next?

Two important steps must follow:

- Choice of message to members
- Evaluation of the negotiations

Message

What are you going to say? You may have achieved all your targets or you may not have done. Was it the best you could have achieved and are the members likely to be satisfied with what you have gained? It is important that you are united in what you feedback.

Evaluation

This is often the part that gets neglected. It is important to learn from what has gone on and the first step is to reflect collectively on the events and everyone’s feelings about it all. What went well; what did not go well; what were you not prepared for; what would/will you do differently. Make some notes so you do not forget it. Also celebrate what you achieved and make sure you recognise the contributions of everyone: it can be a very demanding process and sometimes you are left feeling a bit deflated so it is important to show that at least amongst the team you appreciated the hard work put in.

VI. What skills do I need to be good at negotiating?

1. Communication

If we look back at our definitions we will see that communication is central to the act of negotiation: how can anything be discussed or agreed without communication? Additionally, if those involved are not good at communicating is it likely that a satisfactory outcome will be achieved? Without these skills the results depend more on chance than on ability.

What do Communication skills consist of?

Communication is often assumed to be about how clearly you express yourself. However it is importantly a two way process and hence you cannot underestimate the value of being able to listen to what is being said. Although it seems straightforward and not really an issue, many of us frequently act as if we are listening but we are not taking everything in, for example because as soon as the person has started talking to us, we have started to think about what we will say in reply. This means we are thinking about our comments and not theirs – we are not really hearing what they are saying.

It is really in your interest to hear exactly what is being said. You do not want to be in a position where afterwards you are accused of ignoring something that it might have been in your interest to hear.

So, Listening skills:

- Stop talking yourself and prepare yourself to listen. Give it your full attention.
- Give yourself time to listen: do not be in a great hurry to respond – you may miss something.
- Clear your mind of preconceptions – they might be saying the same old thing...but they might not. Be sure you hear what they say, not what you thought they were going to say.
- Seek clarification where necessary: if you did not hear something or are not sure about an aspect. Sometimes repeating back to them what you think they said is useful
- Watch for their tone and body language – it might give you clues as to what they are thinking
- Watch your tone and body language - it might give them clues. Try to make sure you are sending out the signals you want to send out.
- Try not to interrupt or to finish what they are saying – you might miss something.
- Be alert also to your own emotional response to certain things. Do not let it cloud your ability to listen

and when it is time for you to make your contribution:

- Be clear: make sure what you say can be understood
- Be accurate; make sure you say what you mean to say
- Clarify and amplify. Make your point in more than one way. Sometimes we hear things one way and do not get it but when it is said in a different way then we follow

- Make sure you complete what you have to say before you deviate or allow yourself to be distracted from your point.

Part of the process involves setting up a dialogue and the more you can be seen to listen and to explain your position, the more you will appear committed to the process. Providing and getting clarification is very important in this regard: it is useful to clarify where you have areas of agreement and where you do not. Sometimes negotiators can miss areas where in fact an agreement has been reached as it has been overshadowed by other discussion.

2. Problem Solving skills

Negotiations present problems: they are there, we are here, how can we find common ground? You need to be resourceful and imaginative to come up with ideas that might work. To know if they might work you need to know exactly what the problem is:

- Problem definition – exactly what are the issues and the parameters
- Identification of possible solutions: what are the ways around this?
- Assessment of possible solutions: are any of these workable/acceptable from either side?
- How might we get our or the other side to agree that it is workable/acceptable?

Sometimes negotiations have succeeded because someone has come up with a new idea for addressing a particular problem. This means you must be open to considering new approaches and must be willing to try to think them up yourself. This of course demands a certain level of mental agility and flexibility.

and then you have to persuade others...

What is it that persuasive people are good at? What makes them persuasive? Plainly there is often a measure of personal charisma but what skills are involved?

- Coherent: you present a very good case for your position and make it seem inevitable or without a viable alternative.
- The 'Vision thing'; offer a strong sense of the future and how things will work; a sense of progress and development being possible.
- Trust worthy: people on the other side of the table need to think you can deliver what you offer.
- Persistent/assertive: the ability to withstand rebuffs and return to your position.

3. Representative skills

I am not acting in my own capacity – I have to bear in mind the interests of others and must take them along with me or alter my position accordingly.

I need to know:

- What my constituency wants
- What they are prepared to give
- How much latitude I have

I need to:

- Keep my members informed, including showing how I have acted in their best interests
- Get feedback
- Possibly even sell the final settlement

I also need to have credibility with the other side. They need to believe I can speak for my members and that my word counts.

4. Team work skills

But also as I am not acting alone, I need to be able to be a good team player:

I need to:

- Stay on message: unless agreed I should not start pursuing my own agenda
- United front: we need to show we are together and that they cannot pick us off one by one
- Assigned role: I need to contribute and act where we have agreed I do so
- Supportive: I need to be aware of how my team are doing and help them where necessary

VII. How to respond to tactics?

A variety of techniques may be employed to destabilise you and thereby give the other side an advantage in the negotiation process. In general where you cannot simply ignore the tactics, you are best advised to bring them out into the open and directly state what you think is happening. You could ask for procedural ground rules for the conduct of the negotiations.

Particular instances:

- Misleading information about facts or intentions:

ask for verification but not in a way that is a personal attack, seeming to accuse them of lying.

- Stressful environment:

Request a change to a more conducive location

- Personal attacks:

Make them overt and identify them as such. Make your view known that such contributions are counter productive

- Threats:

Ignore them or challenge their appropriateness in terms of addressing the real issues

- Being difficult [eg refusing to negotiate, hoping to use their entry into negotiations as a bargaining chip, or making extreme demands.]

You have to make plain the fact that you consider it a tactic and ask whether they are in fact committed to negotiations. Any take-it-or-leave-it offers should not be treated on face value but simply as further proposals and discussed as such. The key is always to rise above any such tactics which hopefully will demonstrate their futility over time and lead to them being dropped.

VIII. What makes a good negotiator?

Much work has been done looking at negotiators and some of it specifically focussed on unions. Irrespective of context it appears to give the same picture:

Principled/co-operative bargaining produces better results all round than positional/competitive bargaining.

Looking at lawyers in the USA, Williams found:

<i>Style</i>	<i>Rated as effective</i>	<i>Rated as ineffective</i>
Cooperative	59%	3%
Competitive	25%	33%

Schneider doing a similar study found:

<i>Style</i>	<i>Rated as effective</i>	<i>Rated as ineffective</i>
Cooperative	54%	3%
Competitive	9%	53%

Perhaps more interestingly, Rackham [a social psychologist] looked specifically at union negotiators. He identified successful negotiators by the following criteria as someone who:

- Is rated as effective by both sides
- has a track record of significant success
- has a track record of successful implementation of agreements

Then he looked at what they had in common and compared it with what other negotiators did.

Amount of planning time: no difference

Looking at the options: considered a wide range of possibilities including those by the other side.

Common ground: spend three times more attention to potential common areas.

The longer-term: more consideration of the long term implications.

Targets: prepare targets and bottom lines in respect of their aims instead of one particular demand.

Sequence and issue planning: do not have a fixed plan for going 1, 2, 3 but might start anywhere and then move on to any other point. The *sequence* is less important than the *issues*.

Person to person

Irritators: much less likely to use remarks that irritate the other side.

Counter-proposals: do not immediately respond to a proposal with their own, rather they listen to what is being said [see above re listening skills]

Defend/attack spirals: they do not get into trading blows with the other side. If they attack, they do it without warning and attack hard.

Behaviour labelling: use this frequently to signal their intention, to create or maintain a calm mood, and to gain attention e.g. 'Can I ask you a question – how many managers are there at present?' Or 'Could I suggest....' However it is noteworthy that disagreements were not signalled – usually some analysis was given before a 'no', which meant the other side had not already turned off.

Testing understanding and summarising: they do far more of this which ensures much clearer mutual understanding and also often gets the other side to reveal more.

Asking questions: they argue less and ask more questions.

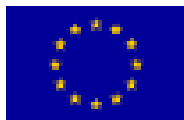
Feelings: more likely to say how they feel about something. This is likely to enhance feelings of trust and openness.

Strength of argument: stick to the key points rather than give too much detail. Lots of detail can give hostages to fortune and weaken your position.

Evaluation: they spent more time reviewing how things had gone.



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