1. **Topic**

Negotiation skills are used daily in the workplace, in both formal and informal situations. In fact, long before you get to the office in the morning, you will likely have negotiated myriad issues at home, such as who is picking up groceries needed to prepare dinner, the best date to make an appointment to get a car serviced, or, which radio station is being played to accompany breakfast preparations.

In the office, your informal negotiations involve asking for a salary increase, working out the details of a contract, seeking flexibility on a deadline affecting your team members, requesting resources from your boss, or, negotiating an investment in your learning plan. It may also involve negotiating for a top assignment that gives you visibility and enhances your ability to advance. Inevitably, each day brings you situations that you must resolve as amicably as possible.

Formal negotiations involving various parties are initiated for labour agreements, for acquisitions, mergers, trade agreements, Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), and, treaty negotiations.

If your workload expands beyond what is reasonable, you learn to negotiate for more resources or change the scope of your role. Each time you negotiate, you must begin with the end goal in mind that you wish to achieve. Ideally, each negotiated outcome should benefit the organization and, you, as well, in a “win-win” scenario.

However, we know that there is something of a gender divide when it comes to negotiating, with men being more likely to ask for a bigger office, or for a promotion, benefiting them directly (Babcock). Women do not hesitate to ask for benefits flowing to others on their team, but, often wait to be asked to put themselves forward for a promotion or to be invited to assume a high-profile role. This ‘value-claiming’ behavior is something with which men tend to be very comfortable, the end result being that men receive higher salaries than do their female counterparts, additional advancement opportunities, and, they secure additional resources for their teams.

Studies have demonstrated that many women managers and leaders do less ‘value-claiming’ than their male peers, and, when they do negotiate and ask for more, their requests are less likely to be viewed positively. Male evaluators of these requests are more likely to penalize women for being assertive (Bowles, Babcock and McGinn, 2005). Women have noted that they would rather go to the dentist than seek to negotiate a promotion or a raise for themselves.

So, how can women frame their informal negotiations, so that they create a ‘dual interest’ value proposition, where they secure a personal gain, and, the organization benefits from the
outcome, at the same time? The following videos, and the accompanying exercises, help to explain the success criteria for winning negotiations.

Ultimately, successful negotiators learn to foster open communications, and, to promote deep debate and conflicting ideas, while ensuring that people do not become entrenched in immovable positions. Elaborating shared interests, and informally resolving conflicts, is the daily currency of a good leader.

2. Assignment:

You are being asked to:

a) Identify one request or “ask” that you would like to negotiate for yourself in your organization.

b) Do your homework. Conduct research into the arguments you will be using to make your business case to your boss or to a colleague, placing the emphasis on what the organization will receive as the result of granting your request.

c) Be persuasive and factual. Maintain your emotional equilibrium.

d) Separate people from the problem or challenge being negotiated.

e) Explore possibilities and the willingness to make trade-offs to achieve your end goal; If the response is that your request is unreasonable, ask questions: “Can you help me to understand why this is the case? If you were in my shoes, what would you do? What can I do to alleviate your concerns? Can you provide me with examples of what you consider to be excellence in this area?”

f) Acknowledge concerns raised and correct the impression: “I can see why it might appear to be the case. But, here’s the experience I have that shows why I am qualified to...”

These kinds of questions, which introduce information and probe objections, allow for a conversation that is collaborative rather than adversarial. They also serve to identify issues that are at stake, operating in the background, and that may only surface as a result of your conversation.

3. Video descriptions and Instructions

You are being asked to view two short videos in this module.

The first video is sponsored by Linda Babcock and it is entitled, “Why Women Don’t Ask.” Dr. Babcock is the Carnegie Mellon Professor in Economics and the video was produced for INSEAD, April 6, 2011. It is 10 minutes and 5 seconds in duration. Men, it is noted, are four times more likely than women to negotiate a better salary, with the result being that salary gaps for women in similar roles can be $2 Million or more over the course of a 40 year career. The social costs for women, who ask for a raise, or for a better opportunity or resources, are discussed here, together with strategies for
achieving a desired outcome. Women are encouraged to conduct salary research as many salaries awarded to their colleagues are a matter of public record. The video can be located at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Rum1YRLDKs

The second video features Margaret Hefferman. It is entitled, “Dare to Disagree.” The video was recorded as a TED Talk and it is 12 minutes and 57 seconds in length. Ms. Hefferman explores the organizational territory of conflict resolution and ways in which successful leaders incorporate the views of those from different backgrounds. The central stories told in this video involve individuals who had the ability as leaders to challenge the status quo, to break the silence when a new truth needed to emerge, enabling people to thrive and to succeed in open networks of high trust. Ms. Hefferman encourages leaders to promote constructive disagreement with ‘thinking partners’ and team members who are not simply ‘echo chambers’ reflecting conventional wisdom. She notes that, in organizations, 85% of managers are afraid of being embroiled in conflicts so practice is required to hone your negotiation and conflict resolution skills. Finding allies, and encouraging deep debate, she suggests, is important to successfully achieving your objectives. Please refer to the video at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PY_kd46RfVE

4. Follow-up Activities and Application

After reviewing these videos, ask yourself:

a) Is disagreement over ideas and direction encouraged in your organization?
b) Do you lead in a way that allows conflicting ideas to emerge?
c) Do you have the courage to speak up?
d) Do you foster deep debate and moral courage?
e) Do you ignore the naysayers and go with those who agree with you?
f) Do you find solutions that work for all concerned or are you part of the conflict?
g) How can you encourage deeper debate and more collaboration in your organization?

Think about your ability to lead principled negotiations and to resolve conflicts promptly and calmly, where people feel that they have been treated in a fair and transparent way. Rate yourself and think about how your colleagues and team members might rate you in these circumstances.

5. Expert Knowledge

Dawn Nicholson-O’Brien is the President and CEO of Celtic Oracle, an executive services consulting firm. A former executive in the Government of Canada, Dawn served in executive level roles during three and a half decades. She also served as the Vice President of the Institute on Governance, has developed and delivered advanced
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6. Key Words

Key words include: negotiating skills; informal and formal negotiations; gender differences in negotiation; conflict resolution; dual interest value proposition; win-win solutions; business case; exploring alternatives and possibilities; maintaining emotional equilibrium; fostering deep debate and constructive disagreement; collaboration and principled negotiation.

7. Additional Resources and Reading


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