

On Negotiation and Influence

“Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate.” -[John F. Kennedy](#)

The Emotional Bank Account: The Amount of Trust in a Relationship

To have any influence on other’s behavior, whether it be closing with a new client, getting your kids to do their chores, or strengthening a friendship amongst many other things, you must build trust into the relationship. There are 6 major ways to build trust:

1. [Understand the Individual](#): Do something that touches on their needs and interests. Make what's important to them as important to you.
2. Attend to the Details: Perform small acts of consideration/kindness.
3. Keep Commitments.
4. Clarify Expectations: Have the courage to clarify roles and goals associated with the relationship.
5. Show Personal Integrity: Conform reality to your words and, fulfill expectations. Be loyal to those not present. In other words, do not slander those not present; doing so would put into question whether you’d do the same with those present if they were not in attendance.
6. Apologize sincerely for any breach of trust.¹

See Things in a Different Light

If you were previously, [stop seeing life as a zero-sum game](#) where there must be a winner and a loser. Human civilizations were built upon the basis of people coming together to build something no sole individual could create on their own. Take the abundance mentality where we can all win, rather than scraping and clawing with one another for the little things. Taking a new stance on abundance will open new doors that were thought not to exist previously.

[Think win/win in all your interactions](#), this is the fundamental reason why people willingly interact with one another in the first place. These types of relationships are developed from high trust relationships (see the previous section for developing trust). Aside from developing the relationship, win/win starts from within you (i.e. your abundance mentality, your

courage, your willingness to express your own interests, and your willing to hear the interests of others). Remember to focus on the desired results, not methods.²

The Problem with Positional Bargaining

[Positional Bargaining](#): A negotiation strategy that involves holding on to a fixed idea, or position, of what you want and arguing for it and it alone, regardless of any underlying interests.

Whether you're negotiating the price of a house, convincing a spouse to move halfway across the country, deciding which movie to watch, or convincing a boss to let you work from home, it is imperative that both sides be satisfied in order to maintain a working relationship.

[Positional bargaining leads to both sides digging into opposing trenches to engage in conflict.](#)

Therefore, any method of negotiation may be fairly judged by 3 criteria:

1. It produces a wise agreement if agreement is possible.
2. It is efficient.
3. It improves or at least does not damage the relationship between the parties.

The more attention that is paid to positions, the less attention is devoted to meeting the underlying concerns of the parties. Positional bargaining thus strains and sometimes shatters the relationship. People's egos become identified with their positions.³ Most arguments end with each of the contestants more firmly convinced that they are right. As the old adage goes "[A man convinced against his will, is of the same opinion still.](#)"⁴ When all is said and done, positional bargaining pits interests against relationships.⁵

Separate the People from the Problem

Even if blame is justified, it is usually counter-productive. Under attack, [the opposing side will become defensive](#) and will resist what you have to say. They'll cease to listen and may retaliate. Blame entangles people with the problem. To focus on solving the problem, distinguish the symptoms from the person whom you're talking to. Both sides must cooperate to find a solution.⁶

If you want the other side to accept a disagreeable conclusion, it's crucial that you involve them in the process of reaching that conclusion. Agreement becomes much easier if both

Copyright © 2018 - Kingston S. Lim

All Rights Reserved

<https://kingstonlim.com/>

parties feel ownership over the ideas. [The feeling of participation in the process is perhaps the single most important factor in determining whether a negotiator accepts a proposal.](#) Determine their values and make your proposal consistent with it. Know that people need to reconcile their stand in negotiation with their principles, past words, and deeds. In other words, they need to save face. Make sure your proposals leave them with their dignity intact and they'll be more likely to go along with it.⁷

We all have emotions and they often can hinder logic. It's important to [let people vent their emotions](#) in a way where they can be acknowledged then set aside during the negotiation. Make emotions explicit, acknowledge them as legitimate, and do your best to understand these emotions. People want sympathy for what they are feeling, remember that. Allow the other side to let off steam, don't react to emotional outbursts.⁸ When one yells the other should listen, as there is no communication between two people yelling.⁹

Focus on Interests Instead

The basic problem in negotiation lies not in conflicting positions, but in the conflict between each side's needs, desires, concerns, and fears. [Focus on the why](#) of the position to understand the interest, and once that interest has been established, understand that every interest has several possible solutions. You must understand their interests before being able to find a solution.

The most powerful interests are basic human needs such as security, economic wellness, sense of belonging, recognition, and control over one's life. It is your job to help the other side understand how important/legitimate your interests are. This can be achieved by recognizing the importance of their side as it allows you to take a strong stance. People tend to think those who understand them are intelligent, sympathetic people whose own opinions may be worth listening to. [Think interests, not positions.](#)¹⁰

Finding the Third Alternative

The third alternative is not your solution or the other person's solution, it is a solution creatively found that suits both parties. It's a third road, a higher road. It involves seeing things from the other person's shoes and understanding their concerns. [Determine results that would be](#)

[fully acceptable to both parties](#) and actively seek new options that will achieve those results. Keep in mind an abundance mentality and build trust within the relationship.¹¹

Put yourself in the other person's place. You may think they're wrong, but discover the reason and you have the key to their actions and perhaps their personality too. Achieve cooperation by demonstrating your value for their opinions/ideas/feelings as much as your own. Showing your concern for what they want is done by openly considering their point of view and acknowledging its legitimacy. Then present yours and convince them of it. Remember that the mass of people thirsts for sympathy. Give it to them and tell them you'd feel the same in their shoes, and they will love and trust you. As you appreciate the way they think, [they'll be more likely to return the favor](#).¹²

Being in their shoes means getting to know them, and how else can you learn about someone but from listening to what they have to say? [Listening is a skill we so often lack](#). Think of it this way: We learned how to read, write, and speak in school. There were classes devoted entirely to each of these forms of communication, but have you ever taken a listening class? Doubtful. So, we must develop that skill for ourselves, and there is no better type of listening than empathic listening. Empathic listening is not listening to agree, but to understand the other person emotionally and intellectually; it is a search through their words for feeling, thoughts, and meaning.¹³

Empathic listening builds trust with the other person as it demonstrates to them your concern for their concerns. It shows a willingness to consider all perspectives before drawing a conclusion, a mentality that naturally [garners respect](#). It shows your good judgement through good understanding. Empathic listening can be broken into four levels:

1. Mimic content (regurgitate).
2. Rephrase the content.
3. Reflect on the feelings of the other person based on what was said.
4. Rephrase the content and reflect on feelings.¹⁴

Focus your efforts on the fourth level, the highest form of empathic listening that combines the previous three forms. After hearing someone speak, summarize what they say from time to time and interpret what they are saying in terms of their emotions. You'll find that most people will happily oblige this, as [we are all self-centered](#). They'll want to talk more and more about themselves the more you encourage it.

Make this a continuous cycle of rephrasing their words and interpreting what they feel until you can explain their position on the subject better than they can themselves. This is empathic listening. It is the influence that you can exert in any given interpersonal relationship, and the more you focus on it the more influence you will gain.¹⁵

Listen to the other side and you build trust with the other person. You've heard their side, now they'll be much more willing to hear yours. Have the courage to explain your side, then the focus can shift to finding an option that suits both interests. Here are some general guidelines for putting new options on the table:

Inventing Creative Options:

- Separate the act of inventing options from judging them.
- Broaden the options on the table rather than seeking a single option.
- [Search for mutual gains.](#)
- Invent ways of making their decision easy.

Try creating several options that you would deem acceptable, and let them pick which one they'd prefer.¹⁶ Ask if it sounds reasonable, it's hard for people to label it unreasonable.¹⁷

Increasing Negotiating Power

To get what you want, you must be able to satisfy the wants of other people first. If you are to think of a brilliant idea on how a certain objective can be reached with a specific method, instead of making other people think it's yours, plant the idea into their minds and let them stir it themselves. Nudge them in the desired direction, if you're working in a fried chicken restaurant for example, and you think milkshakes will increase revenue, make casual comments to the decision maker (i.e. your boss) on how customers were saying they'd buy milkshakes if they were offered.

[Give the opposing side a feeling of importance](#) and sense of control. They will then regard the idea as their own and may be more likely to implement it. This is because people are more likely to accept an order if they have had a part in the decision of the order. Try asking them logical questions that guide them into seeing the reasonableness of your needs.¹⁸

While giving the other party some measure of control, be sure to also lead them toward a desired conclusion, which can be done through appealing to a higher cause. For example, gain cooperation by pointing out how their actions harm children to motivate them to cease engaging in it. Conversely, point out that if they do what you want, it will help a nobler cause, such as charity. One example would be to promise them that a portion of sales made in conjunction with them will go toward charity. Many wealthy individuals would perceive a sum of money given to them directly as an insult and a bribe, but view it entirely differently if the money is given to a higher cause.¹⁹

No matter how well you handle a situation, know that the chances of finding a mutually agreeable solution can always fall through the cracks. Thus, it's important to [have a plan B](#), an alternative. Think of a list of action you can take if no agreement can be settled upon, then tentatively select the one alternative you deem best.²⁰

Strengthen your hand by informing the other party of your alternative if it's an attractive one. If not, keep your alternative to yourself. Keep in perspective that the more easily and happily you can walk away from a negotiation, the greater your ability to affect its outcome.²¹

Repelling Dirty Tricks

People can be reasonable and accommodating if shown the same courtesy. The flip side is that some individuals will go to great extents to get their way in an underhanded fashion. Here are a few common tactics to be aware of when dealing with this archetype:

- Bullying for a Concession
 - Threatening retribution, stating a refusal to continue doing business unless demands are met right then and there.
 - Tactic: Refuse to negotiate (i.e. "I'll see you in court").
- [Extreme Demands](#)
 - Asking for double the appraised fair value of a house for a home sale.
 - Tactic: Ask for objective justification based on facts. Ask logical questions until it looks ridiculous even to them.
- Lock in Tactics (forced "do or die" situations)
 - Think of a game of chicken where two trucks are about to slam into one another unless one swerves to another lane. It may take the form of one party loudly and publicly announcing they will not sell their home for less than a set price.

- Tactic: Deemphasize the issue, make it look like no big deal. This allows the other side to more gracefully back down and save face.
- Calculated Delay (the other side postpones decision until its favorable to them)
 - A company's management may decide to delay wage dispute talks with the labor union until the next election where their favored candidate is expected to win and crack down on the unions.
 - Tactic: Visibly move toward a perceived better alternative. Now they have something to lose.²²

Takeaway: [Trust is needed](#) in any relationship to effectively influence other people. Take the viewpoint that you and the other party can both win by not going your route or theirs, but by finding a third way where the method is different but interests are met. Listen to what they have to say first and really understand their viewpoint, only then can you reconcile the differences in your positions. Give them a say in the decision, and they'll be more likely to comply.

- 1-2. *"The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People"* -[Stephen Covey](#)
3. *"Getting to Yes"* -[Roger Fisher](#) & [William Ury](#)
4. *"How to Win Friends and Influence People"* -[Dale Carnegie](#)
- 5-6. *"Getting to Yes"* -[Roger Fisher](#) & [William Ury](#)
7. *"How to Win Friends and Influence People"* -[Dale Carnegie](#)
8. *"Getting to Yes"* -[Roger Fisher](#) & [William Ury](#)
9. *"How to Win Friends and Influence People"* -[Dale Carnegie](#)
10. *"Getting to Yes"* -[Roger Fisher](#) & [William Ury](#)
11. *"The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People"* -[Stephen Covey](#)
12. *"How to Win Friends and Influence People"* -[Dale Carnegie](#)
- 13-15. *"The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People"* -[Stephen Covey](#)
16. *"Getting to Yes"* -[Roger Fisher](#) & [William Ury](#)
17. *"The 4 Hour Work Week"* -[Tim Ferriss](#)
- 18-19. *"How to Win Friends and Influence People"* -[Dale Carnegie](#)
- 20-22. *"Getting to Yes"* -[Roger Fisher](#) & [William Ury](#)