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# Negotiating the Impossible

## How to Break Deadlocks and Resolve Ugly Conflicts (Without Money or Muscle)

### THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

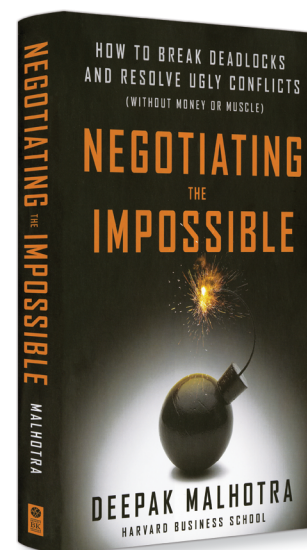
Some negotiations are easy. Others are more difficult. And then there are situations that seem completely hopeless. Conflict is escalating, people are getting aggressive and no one is willing to back down. And to top it off, you have little power or other resources to work with. Harvard professor and negotiation adviser Deepak Malhotra shows how to defuse even the most potentially explosive situations and to find success when things seem impossible.

Malhotra identifies three broad approaches for breaking deadlocks and resolving conflicts, and draws out scores of actionable lessons. He shows how his principles and tactics can be applied in everyday life, whether you are making corporate deals, negotiating job offers or resolving business disputes.

As Malhotra reminds us, regardless of the context or which issues are on the table, negotiation is always, fundamentally, about human interaction. No matter how high the stakes or how protracted the dispute, the object of negotiation is to engage with other human beings in a way that leads to better understandings and agreements. The principles and strategies in this book will help you do this more effectively in every situation.

### IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- Three crucial levers for successful negotiation.
- Why and how to frame, or make sense of, negotiations early.
- Why the process of negotiations is just as important as the substance.
- How learning to empathize will increase your chances of success.



by Deepak Malhotra

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# THE COMPLETE SUMMARY: NEGOTIATING THE IMPOSSIBLE

by Deepak Malhotra

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*Negotiating the Impossible: How to Break Deadlocks and Resolve Ugly Conflicts (Without Money or Muscle)* by Deepak Malhotra. Copyright © 2016 by Deepak Malhotra, has been summarized with permission of the publisher, Berrett-Koehler. 224 pages, \$27.95, ISBN: 978-1-626-56697-2.

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## Introduction

Even seemingly impossible deadlocks and conflicts can be resolved if we shed the assumption that our only sources of leverage are money and muscle. This is especially important to keep in mind when you are dealing with a situation that seems hopeless. When even your most generous offers are being rejected, when your well-intentioned attempts at addressing the issues are being thwarted, and when you have little power with which to impose a solution, you need a different approach and other sources of leverage.

Too often, when people hear the word “negotiation,” they equate it with haggling or debating, or imagine people in suits hammering out a deal. They think of negotiation as something we do once in a while — or worse, as a daunting or unpleasant task that should be avoided if possible. We would benefit from thinking differently.

Negotiation, regardless of the context or the issues involved, is fundamentally about human interaction. However simple or complex the issues, however well-intentioned or malicious the parties, however familiar or unprecedented the challenges, the question we are always trying to answer in negotiation is this: How might we engage with other human beings in a way that leads to better understandings and agreements?

Negotiation, then, is the process by which two or more parties who perceive a difference in interests or perspective attempt to reach agreement.

There are three crucial levers that negotiators often ignore, underestimate or mismanage, especially when they are accustomed to thinking of power in terms of money and muscle:

- **The Power of Framing.** Effective negotiators know that *how* you articulate or structure your proposals can be as important as *what* you are proposing.
- **The Power of Process.** Negotiating the process astutely can be more important than bargaining hard on the substance of the deal.
- **The Power of Empathy.** A dispassionate and methodical approach to understanding the real interests and perspective of all relevant players can help to resolve even the ugliest of conflicts.

Which one of these levers will be the key to solving your problem — or, whether you will need to use multiple levers — will depend on the situation. Alone, each of these is extremely effective. Together, they provide a comprehensive approach to negotiating the impossible. ●

## PART I: THE POWER OF FRAMING

The “frame” of the negotiation is a psychological lens. It is a sense-making apparatus that influences how people perceive each other, the issues at hand and the options that exist. There is almost no limit to the number and types of frames that can emerge in a negotiation. For example, negotiators may look at a deal through a financial or a strategic lens, see it from a short-term or a long-term perspective, or regard it as a friendly or hostile engagement.

There are no “right” or “wrong” frames, but which frame takes hold has important implications for how the parties behave and what they will ultimately be willing to accept. Sometimes a low-stakes issue that neither side



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really cares much about becomes infused with so much political or symbolic significance that neither side is willing or able to back down.

Importantly, negotiators almost always have the power to influence the frame, and reframing can be a powerful tool for overcoming barriers to deal making. Regardless of the objective stakes, much of what determines how people approach a problem depends on how they (or their constituents) *subjectively* make sense of it. Deal makers are unwilling to make concessions to perceived adversaries but are more amenable to doing so when they perceive the task as a collaborative problem-solving effort. Negotiators who frame a conflict as “winner takes all” will have a harder time than negotiators who believe it is possible for everyone to “win.” Negotiators will be more or less willing to accept certain proposals when they adopt a short-term versus a long-term lens, or when the offer appears better versus worse than what they initially expected.

Objectively identical proposals and options can be reframed to make them more attractive to the other side. Paying attention not just to the substance of what is being negotiated, but also the lens through which parties are evaluating their options, can sometimes help break seemingly impossible deadlocks.

Control the frame of the negotiation. The frame that takes hold will shape how negotiators make decisions, evaluate options and decide what is acceptable. ●

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### Leveraging the Power of Framing

Too often, negotiators incorrectly assume that if you get the substance of the deal right — that is, your proposal is sufficiently valuable to the other side — then you do not have to worry about “how it looks,” also called *the optics of the deal*.

The role of optics is especially pronounced when there is an audience. The audience can be voters, the media, competitors, future negotiation partners, a boss, colleagues or even friends and family. We are usually aware of our own audience, but we pay insufficient attention to theirs. In fact, their audience is just as important to consider as ours, especially if we are asking them to back down or make hefty concessions. To think of their audience as “their problem” ignores a central tenet of most difficult negotiations: there is no such thing as their problem; what seems to be their problem, if left unsolved, eventually becomes your problem. You may have already given them an offer that is superior to their alternatives, one that they “should” accept, but if you have not paid sufficient attention to the

other factors that influence their decisions, you may find that even your generous offers are being rejected.

In the 1991 book *Getting Past No*, William Ury tells us to “write their victory speech” for them. Carefully consider not just how much value you are providing to the other side, but also how they and their audience will view an offer. Think about how they can possibly say yes to what you are proposing and still declare victory.

It is not always obvious whether the other side truly needs a substantive concession or merely has a problem with how your offer will look to their audiences. As you might also suspect, the other side is often unwilling to clarify which of these is the case. Make it safe for the other side to ask for help on optics. Build a reputation for rewarding transparency and not exploiting their moments of weakness.

### Avoid One-Issue Negotiations

A common problem in negotiations is getting stuck on one divisive issue. Counterintuitive as it may seem, negotiations are often easier when you have more than one thing to fight about. When there is only one issue on the table, and it is not easy to see how both sides can get what they want — or as much as they have promised to their audiences — you have a zero-sum problem in which at least one of you is going to feel or look like you lost. In these situations, it is useful to consider whether you can bring other issues to the table so that each side can walk away with something. If there is only one issue, try to split it into two or more separate issues. ●

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### The Logic of Appropriateness

How do people make decisions? We are all familiar with one way people choose: cost-benefit analysis. The basic idea is that people weigh the costs and benefits of all options and pick the one that seems to be best overall, perhaps with some adjustment based on risk preferences.

Social scientists James March and Johan Olsen have an alternative model for decision making, which they refer to as the logic of appropriateness. They suggest that, rather than engaging in a potentially complex or time-consuming cost-benefit analysis, people often make decisions by asking themselves a simple question: “What does a person like me do in a situation like this?”

If we take the logic of appropriateness seriously, it means that we should be mindful of whether people will perceive our offer or preferred option as “appropriate,” and also of how we might boost the appropriateness of the proposals we make.

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These principles are among the most powerful and broadly applicable means of boosting the appropriateness — and hence the attractiveness — of an idea or proposal.

**Leverage social proof.** The principle of “social proof,” as articulated by social psychologist Robert Cialdini, says that when people are unsure about which way to go or what to choose, they look to the behavior of others, actual or implied. According to the logic of appropriateness, if we think most others are actually doing something, it must be appropriate. This is because when people look at the world, they think the world is supposed to make sense. And so when they see other people choosing a certain course of action, they say to themselves, “There must be a reason,” and take it as a signal that it is the correct or normal or acceptable behavior. Not surprisingly, then, the most direct way to boost the appropriateness of an option is to demonstrate or signal that others are also choosing it.

**Set the default option.** When something is the presumptive or preset choice in a setting, it leads people to conclude “It must be the default for a reason” — that is, it must be what most others do, or it is normal or acceptable. You can boost an option’s appropriateness by making it the default.

**Shift the reference point.** Is \$10,000 a lot of money? It depends on what you are comparing it to or contemplating. If you are thinking about buying a watch, it is a lot of money and the amount will be very salient; if you’re buying a house or discussing the national debt, then it is not particularly attention-worthy. The point is that people do not react to or evaluate data and options in a vacuum. Someone who is evaluating an offer, the suitability of a timetable or the level of success achieved on a performance metric always has some reference point in mind. If it is the “wrong” reference point, even the best data or the most meritorious argument will be evaluated as weak. Before presenting your information, then, it is wise to set an appropriate reference point.

**Don’t apologize for your offer.** The moment you seem apologetic, you give the other side the license to start haggling. This does not mean you should be unwilling to negotiate price. Nor does it mean you shouldn’t explain your price. But when you apologize for your offer, you are creating a frame that says your proposal is inappropriate and that even you do not think it is a reasonable starting point. If you are bringing more to the table than competing offers, you want to shift the frame to a discussion of value. For example, if the customer complains about the price being too high, the salesperson might say, “I think what you’re wondering is, how is it that despite having

this price we have so many people lining up to buy our product? What kind of value are we delivering that allows us to win so many deals over our competitors? I’m happy to have that conversation...” ●

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### First-Mover Advantage

In 1786, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams signed the “Moroccan–American Treaty of Friendship” that had been negotiated between the American representative, Thomas Barclay, and Mohammed III, Sultan of Morocco. The treaty, written in Arabic and then translated into English, had 25 articles, mostly pertaining to naval and commercial matters. The final article set the length of the treaty obligations: “This Treaty shall continue in full Force, with the help of God for Fifty Years.” Almost 230 years later, it is still in effect.

But the signing of the Treaty of Friendship merely formalized a relationship that had already existed between the two countries for almost a decade. The first, and most consequential, step towards friendship was planted in 1777, when Morocco became the first sovereign country to recognize the independence of the fledgling United States of America. In December of that year, seeing the value of enhanced commercial relationships with America, the sultan announced that the ports of his country would be open to the United States. While it took a few years for the U.S. government to respond to this offer — they had more pressing concerns during the war with England — it planted the seed that would grow into a friendship and a commercial relationship for centuries.

There is a powerful first-mover advantage when it comes to framing. The sooner a frame takes hold, the more likely it is to stick and to shape subsequent negotiations. We saw this when discussing default options: It pays to start with your initial template for the negotiations, or with your draft of the agreement. In the case of the longstanding relationship between the United States and Morocco, the friendship frame was set early on, when there was no prior, dominant frame to contest it.

In business contexts, multiple frames are usually established very early in the deal-making process. These include, for example, who is perceived as strong or weak, whether it makes sense to be transparent or to be guarded, and which reference points or precedents are appropriate when evaluating offers, valuations and so on. Effective negotiators are mindful of the influence such frames will have as the negotiation unfolds, and seek to establish the preferred frame as early as possible. ●

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## PART II: THE POWER OF PROCESS

The substance of a negotiation is about what the parties are trying to achieve. Process is about how they will get from where they are today to where they want to be. Even the most brilliant strategy for the substance of negotiations can be undermined if there is insufficient attention to process. Here are just a few elements of process to consider and try to shape:

How long will negotiations last? Who will be involved and in what capacity? What will be on the agenda, and in what order will issues be discussed? Who will draft the initial proposal? Will negotiations be public or private? When and how will progress be reported outside of negotiations? Given multiple parties or issues, will there be one negotiation track or many? Will all the parties be in the same room at the same time? How will major deadlocks or other problems be managed? Will deadlines, if any, be binding or not? What milestones might help build momentum and keep the process on track? If the negotiations end in no deal, when and how might parties re-engage?

In most negotiations, some or many of these factors will be predetermined, or there may be a default process in place due to precedent or the actions of other parties. But defaults need not be blindly accepted — they can be reset to great advantage.

Have a process strategy: How will you get from where you are today to where you want to be? Consider the factors that influence whether, when and how substantive negotiations will occur.

Also, a process strategy for deal making is not enough — you also have to strategize the implementation process. What will be required for successful implementation? How will you garner sufficient support for the deal? How will you ensure ratification? While getting the substance right is essential, getting the process wrong can still be fatal. Moreover, it is not enough to give process elements due consideration: Process should be given precedent. Focusing on process early can sometimes help avoid deadlocks and ugly conflicts altogether. ●

## Leveraging the Power of Process

Consider the following: You have been negotiating with your counterpart for weeks. After considerable effort, you seem close to reaching a deal. You decide to offer one final concession that you have so far resisted and agree to

one of their more onerous demands — a move you hope will seal the deal. You make the concession, and the other party responds, “Thank you. This is extremely helpful. I appreciate your flexibility. Now, I’d just like to go over things with my boss to see what she thinks about it.” And you are sitting there, stunned, thinking to yourself, “What? You have a boss? I thought this was going to be the end. I have nothing more to give.” The mistake, in this somewhat stylized example, is one that is all too common. It is a failure to negotiate process before diving into substance.

Negotiating the process involves evaluating the default (or proposed) process and reshaping it if necessary and possible. It also entails asking questions, sharing assumptions and expectations, and reaching as close to a common understanding as possible on the path from where you are to the finish line. How will we get from here to there, and what are the factors that can influence the trajectory and speed?

A failure to negotiate process effectively can lead to mistakes on substance later on, including poorly timed concessions; ill-conceived proposals or demands; coordination failures across different tracks or channels in the negotiation; and the failure to anticipate barriers, such as deadlines, political or bureaucratic hurdles and the behavior of spoilers.

Even when there is clear agreement on process at the outset, parties can sometimes get misaligned regarding their views on where they are in the process. One party may feel that they are close to a deal and should forgo other options, while the other thinks it is still legitimate to be shopping around. Ensure — early and often — that there is agreement about what has been accomplished and what the path ahead looks like.

Even when you have no ability to shape the process, there is much to be gained by seeking clarity and commitment on the process. Greater clarity (an understanding of the process) and commitment (assurances that the process will be followed) can help negotiators navigate towards better outcomes and avoid strategic and tactical mistakes even when they do not have the leverage to change the process.

Of course, there is no guarantee that the other side will respond to your request for clarity or discuss potential problems that may arise, but even a refusal by the other side to answer certain questions can be informative. In the case of process, if the other party in the deal or dispute will not answer reasonable questions about process, it allows you to further explore whether this reflects bad intentions or a lack of preparation on their part, or that they are merely keeping their options open. At the very least, you can be more vigilant as you navigate the deal. ●

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## Preserve Forward Momentum

In protracted conflicts where finding a solution will take a long time — and in relationships where the parties will have to negotiate with each other again in the future — it is necessary to preserve forward momentum. Forward momentum is the deliberate, gradual progress towards eliminating obstacles and creating the conditions that might eventually lead to a successful outcome. Unfortunately, short-term temptations abound that create the risk of sacrificing forward momentum. The desire to “win” today can make it difficult to make even modest progress tomorrow.

There is nothing, per se, inappropriate about trying hard to get the best deal for one’s constituents. The problem surfaces when this pursuit induces negotiators to break long-standing norms of behavior, to disrupt implied or explicit agreements, or to legitimize the use of “whatever it takes” tactics in an environment where cooperation and moderation might have otherwise taken root. Instead of doing whatever possible to make progress easier, negotiators who engage in such behaviors will motivate a desire for revenge and displace collaborative rules of engagement.

Before using tactics to gain advantage, consider: How will this affect our ability to negotiate productively in the future?

## The Dark Side of Consensus

Consensus certainly has its merits. But the more people who have veto power, the fewer the degrees of freedom you have to structure a satisfactory deal, because there are too many demands on the limited resources available. The need to bring everyone on board creates a situation in which anything that isn’t bolted down is subject to compromise, and the emergent agreement is likely to be strategically shortsighted — that is, designed to solve current problems at the cost of ignoring or exacerbating future problems.

Deal makers and diplomats will often try to adopt the principle of sufficient consensus. Instead of requiring that everyone at the table vote in favor of each proposal, the parties agree that negotiations can proceed as long as there is a “high enough” level of acceptance among and within the parties (e.g., 80 percent of all parties must agree in favor of the provision, and 60 percent of all individuals must agree). ●

## Stay at the Table

Most negotiations, even successful ones, leave residual conflict in their wake. For example, some salespeople will

disengage with customers after a deal is signed (or when it fails) and re-engage only when it is time to pitch the next deal.

A wiser strategy is to stay at the table, at least figuratively if not physically, even when there is no visible prospect for a deal or money to be made. Especially in the aftermath of “failed” negotiations, the natural tendency is for the relationship to further deteriorate, for trust to diminish and for perspectives to diverge further. Continued engagement is crucial to keep relationships intact, audit the potentially changing interests and constraints of all parties and explore the possibility of renewed negotiations.

Also, it is often easier to obtain information and build trust when substantive negotiations are not under way, because there is less anxiety that sharing information will give the other side an advantage in a deal. Stay engaged regardless of the outcome; there may come a time when the deal you reached can be improved, or the no deal you reached can be reversed.

Wise negotiators do what they can to get a seat at the table. If that is not possible, there are other ways to influence what happens in a negotiation. If you don’t have a seat at the table, you might influence deal makers by creating value outside of the deal or by offering to help sell or implement the current deal. ●

## PART III: THE POWER OF EMPATHY

The mistake people make is to think that empathy is what you use when you want to be nice, or that it is an instrument of the weak. This reflects a dangerous flaw in understanding. For negotiators, the reason to empathize with the enemy is not because it is somehow the “nice” or “liberal” or “enlightened” approach to dealing with nasty people. We need to empathize because it makes it more likely that we can achieve our own goals.

In negotiations of all kinds, the greater your capacity for empathy — the more carefully you try to understand all of the other party’s motivations, interests and constraints — the more options you tend to have for potentially resolving the dispute or deadlock. Empathy does not guarantee success, but a lack of empathy usually guarantees failure.

Most of us see ourselves as being relatively understanding and empathetic, but we fail to act this way when we are dealing with people who have done things that we find abhorrent or inexplicable. Yet, these are precisely the situations where empathy is most needed. You already

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understand your friends; the key to resolving conflicts lies in understanding your enemies.

It is important not to confuse empathy with sympathy. The goal is to understand what is causing someone to behave a certain way; it does not mean you have to approve of their goals or actions. There is a difference between explaining the other side's behavior and justifying it. When you are dealing with difficult negotiations and ugly conflicts, it is not necessary to agree with the other side, but it is crucial to understand them. ●

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### Leveraging the Power of Empathy

When the other side has a lot of power and seems willing to engage in unscrupulous behavior, your options seem limited. But a number of options might not be immediately apparent because inaccurate assumptions are being made about the underlying problem. It is crucial for deal makers to investigate what factors other than sheer incompetence or evil intentions might motivate the other party to behave in a manner that seems aggressive, unfair, unethical or irrational. Of course, you might conclude after an exhaustive examination that they really *are* out to get you, but it is best not to start with that assumption.

Not every negotiation should end with a deal. If the best you have to offer the other side is worse than their alternatives, not reaching a deal is the right outcome. Not reaching a deal is tragic only when you are the right partners for each other and value could be created for everyone, but something is standing in the way of getting it done.

Broadly speaking, there are three classes of barriers that negotiators ought to consider:

**Psychological Barriers:** These are barriers that exist in the minds of people, such as mistrust, ego, disliking the other party, emotions, biased perceptions of fairness and overconfidence.

**Structural Barriers:** These are barriers that are associated with the “rules of the game” as currently established — e.g., time pressure, having the wrong parties at the table, the use of agents whose incentives are misaligned with yours, too much media attention, insufficient availability of information, other deals or agreements that are constraining your options, etc.

**Tactical Barriers:** These barriers arise from behaviors and choices on either side, such as publicly committing to a position that is untenable, aggressive tactics that provoke retaliation, focusing too narrowly on one issue and failing

to consider all of the interests of each party, choosing not to exchange information and so on.

The more carefully you evaluate all the challenges that you may face, and the more comprehensively you consider the various tools and tactics at your disposal for addressing them, the more likely that your deal-making efforts will succeed.

### Ignore Ultimatums

Every so often, in big negotiations and small, ultimatums are given: statements such as “We will never...”, “Under no conditions can we...”, “You must...” or “That’s impossible.” But many of the ultimatums that get thrown about in negotiations do not reflect absolute “red lines” or deal breakers. Sometimes people are just angry or upset, and the words come out more aggressively than necessary. Sometimes the other side feels that they have been pushed around for too long and are now simply trying to assert some control.

Ignore ultimatums. The more attention you give to them, the harder it will be for the other side to back down if the situation changes. Remember: What is not negotiable today may be negotiable tomorrow. How the other side approaches a negotiation is not only likely to change over the weeks, months and years ahead; it can also be shaped by the actions you take. ●

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### Yielding

Sometimes neither controlling the frame nor reframing is an option. Sometimes there is already a dominant frame, a well-established lens through which one or more of the parties are viewing the situation. You may be walking into a protracted negotiation or conflict where the parties have a deeply rooted perspective on the issues and their options.

When all else fails, you can sometimes overcome resistance to your ideas and proposals by *yielding* — that is, understanding and co-opting the other side's frame or perspective to make it work for you. Yielding means “going with” and not “giving in.” Doing so effectively requires a clear and unbiased understanding of how the other side views the situation and of the metrics they will use to evaluate ideas and options.

Sometimes there is not one dominant perspective but two equally strong philosophies competing for dominance. This can be the case when each side has strong views on the correct way to discuss or evaluate issues, and they have seemingly incompatible ways of looking at the problem. In such a case, one potential solution is *bridging*: finding a

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way for one side to adopt the other's frame without losing leverage, or proposing a new frame that they can both safely adopt.

Competing perspectives can be bridged if one side can adopt the other's frame without sacrificing their ability to articulate key demands, or both sides can agree to a new frame that gives neither an advantage. ●

## Map Out the Negotiation Space

A common mistake in negotiation is to think about relationships *bilaterally* — that is, to focus only on your relationship with the party across the table from you. The negotiation analysis changes when parties think *trilaterally*: evaluating not only the relationship that the parties have with each other but the relationships each has with other parties. The negotiation space consists of all parties that are relevant to the negotiation. “Relevant” means one of two things: (a) any party that can influence this deal and (b) any party that is influenced by the deal.

The more you “zoom out” to see the negotiation in the broader context, the more accurate will be your understanding of the other side's likely behavior, and the more likely you are to wisely revise your strategy when relevant events take place elsewhere in the negotiation space.

When it comes to understanding the other parties in the deal, what precisely are we to understand about them? Here is a framework (ICAP) to help organize your thinking around four critical factors: each party's interests, constraints, alternatives and perspective. Here are the kinds of questions that each of these raises:

**Interests.** What do the other parties value? What do they want and why? Why are they doing this deal? Why now rather than last month or next year?

**Constraints.** What are the things they can and cannot do? On which issues do they have more or less flexibility? What is causing them to be constrained? How might their constraints change over time?

**Alternatives.** What happens to them if there is no deal? Are their outside options strong or weak? Are their alternatives likely to improve or deteriorate over time?

**Perspective.** How are they seeing this deal? What is their mindset? Where does this negotiation fit into the portfolio of deals they are doing? Is this a high or low priority for them?

An ICAP analysis at the outset of negotiations, and updating the analysis as the deal progresses, can be crucial. ●

## Partners, Not Opponents

It is always best to remember that the people you are dealing with are not competitors, allies, enemies or friends — they are just people who, like you, have interests, constraints, alternatives and perspectives. As a negotiator, your job is to understand these factors and to address the situation accordingly. It is useful to retain the label “partner” for everyone (whether they are acting like a “friend” or “foe”), because it reminds you to have empathy, to be open to the possibility of collaboration in even the most difficult relationships, and to shed assumptions about what is or is not possible.

In the world of business, negotiators often talk about “creating value.” Negotiators should be in the business of creating value whether they are bargaining over deal terms, facing deadlock or addressing an ugly conflict.

In difficult situations, an effective way to clarify objectives and choose between options is to ask, What would be the value-maximizing solution? For example, creating a business relationship with the person who is suing you is not intuitive, unless you are dispassionately looking to create value in every situation. Here again, we see the value of regarding all other parties as partners, not opponents, in the process. When you see them as your partner, you are more likely to identify and implement value-creating solutions to the problem.

Every problem wants to be solved. This is especially true in negotiation. You may not solve it today — it may not even be solvable today — but you will solve it sooner when you remember that all problems of negotiation are, fundamentally, problems of human interaction. Therefore, humans have the capacity to solve them.

Our ability to find unique solutions to our problems is greatly enhanced when we are skilled in using all of our sources of leverage — not just money and muscle but also the powers of framing, process and empathy. ●

### RECOMMENDED READING LIST

If you liked *Negotiating the Impossible*, you'll also like:

1. ***Persuasion Equation* by Mark Rodgers.** Rodgers reveals what drives decisions and introduces the persuasion equation — a powerful combination of factors proven to speed agreement.

2. ***Just Listen* by Mark Goulston.** A veteran psychiatrist and business coach, Goulston reveals the secret of how to get through to anyone, even when productive communication seems impossible.

3. ***Real Influence* by John Ullmen, Mark Goulston.** The authors provide a four-step method to examine your priorities, learn about the key players and what they need, earn their attention and motivate them to hear more, and add value with your questions and action.