

Negotiating Style



PROFILE REPORT

Sample Reports
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Introduction

Like communication or listening skills, negotiating skills are not a special skill to be produced on rare occasions where the circumstances are appropriate. We use negotiation skills almost every day of our lives, and in many different ways.

- People can use negotiating skills to:
- Bargain on the price of a product or service
- Settle differences in a dispute situation
- Amend contracts, either formally or informally
- Agree to a goal or an outcome to aim for
- Arrive at comfortable terms to work together or to co-operate
- To find a compromise of some sort

All of these negotiating situations have one thing in common: they require two or more people to communicate with one another to reach a DEAL of some sort. However, negotiation is a special kind of communication, because it uses a number of tactics and methods for communicating that are not usually part of normal, everyday conversation or discussion.

While communication methods and tactics are subjects that fill far too many bookshelves, a simple model is described in this profile that offers the negotiator some guidance on their own negotiation style, and other people that they deal with.

The model shown in this profile is a two axis grid, one axis describes the level of "energy" that the negotiator can choose to adopt, from powerful to gentle. This usually means verbal energy in terms of speaking (when the voice may be louder, more enthusiastic, and faster), but it also has associated non-vocal characteristics such as leaning forward, high use of the hands, etc.

The other axis on the grid relates to the level of empathy that is chosen by the negotiator. This runs from coercive to persuasive.

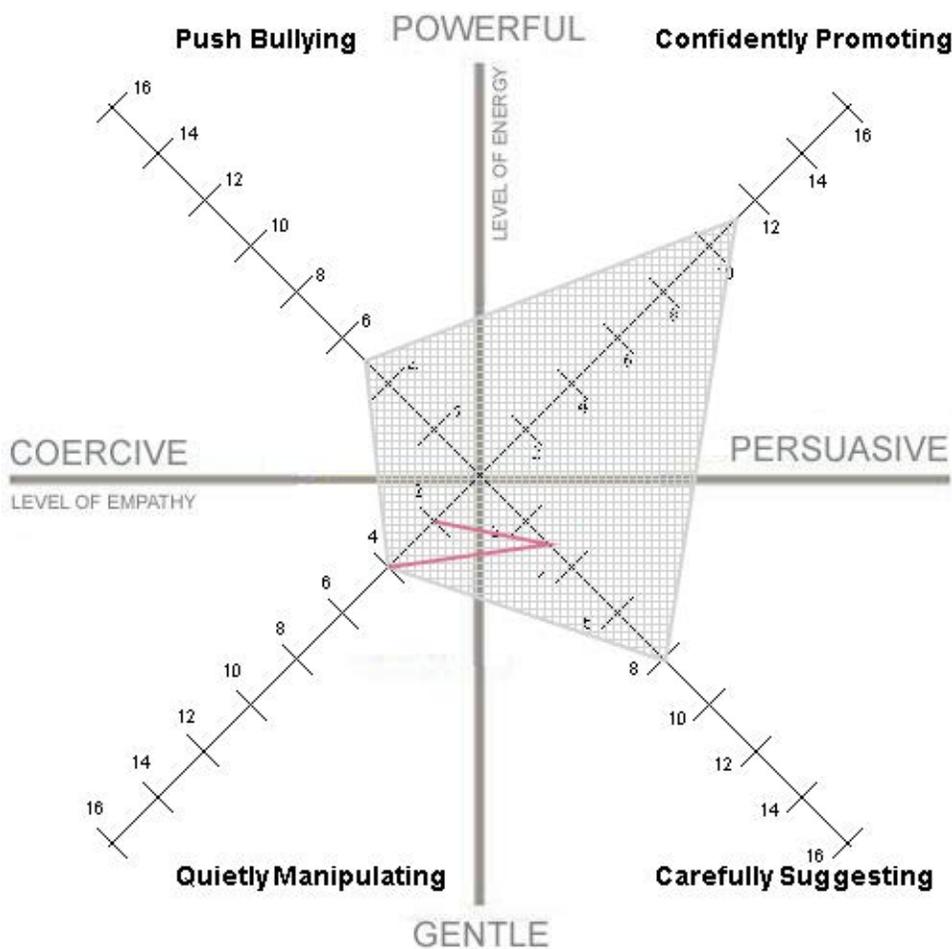
By intersecting these two axes, the grid created shows four negotiating styles. Each of these four styles may be adopted to different degrees in a single negotiation. This may reflect the particular phase of the negotiation, or merely be a response to the information given by the other party.

Of course, while all of these styles have their associated strengths and weaknesses, some are more useful and applicable in different circumstances than others. The diamond shape (shaded area) shows how much of each quadrant in the grid is typically used by an effective negotiator. Don't forget these are only averages, not fixed recipes for all people in all negotiations. Although the level of energy is a little higher than average, it is the persuasion side of the grid that dominates. This means that coercion is generally to be used sparingly in a negotiation, if at all!



Negotiating Grid Profile

Sample Reports



Note: The diamond-shaped gray shaded area shows how much of each style is generally favored by the most effective negotiators. However, each set of circumstances will call for a different style or combination of styles in greater or lesser amounts. Successful negotiators are able to flex and change styles to fit the situation.

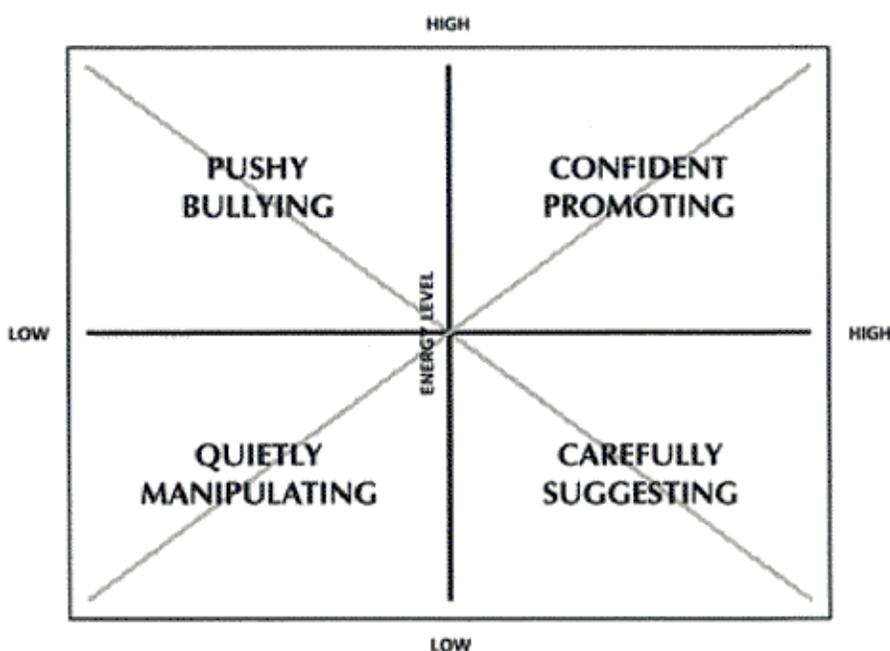


Interpreting Your Results

The effective negotiating grid has four quadrants, which carry four 'labels'. These are:

1. **Pushy bullying**
2. **Quietly suggesting**
3. **Carefully suggesting**
4. **Confident promoting**

These quadrants are the outcome descriptions from the level of energy and the level of empathy used in negotiating. This is represented on two intersecting axes in a simple grid fashion as follows:



Individuals may actually draw on all four of these different communication styles in the same negotiation, or in different negotiations from time to time. In addition, an individual can learn or choose to use more of a particular style than another. However, if the instrument has been completed honestly, for the most part, an individual is likely to have a primary and/or a secondary style that are considerably stronger than the others. This means that they are likely to adopt these styles more often and with greater ease than other styles.

Each negotiating style has its inherent strengths and weaknesses, depending upon the person, the other negotiating party and the type of negotiation to take place. Lets look at each of these styles in more detail (although it should be remembered that these descriptions relate to high scores in these quadrants-usually 6 or more. Lower scores will have only some of the characteristics described.



The Four Negotiating Styles

PUSHY BULLYING

Sample's score for this style: -3.00

You will therefore naturally make no use of this style

In this high energy, low empathy quadrant, the individual is literally likely to want to 'push' for what they want and even try to 'bully' the other party to reach a desired outcome. This style can therefore be commanding of attention and even loud. It can also be seen to be adversarial and insensitive to the relationship needs of others. It is a style that can only be used in some transactional negotiations and sparingly in most negotiations. The pros and cons of this style are shown on the page overleaf.

Likely Body Language: Leaning forward, louder voice, high use of hands in aggressive manner (like pointing) and very direct eye contact.

Of these four styles, data gathered to date suggests that it is the confident promoting style that is used the most and is adopted more than any other by effective negotiators (who are happy with the end result of their efforts). This is followed by the carefully suggesting style, the pushy bullying style and the quietly manipulating style last. It should be noted however that this is only an 'averaged' finding. It needs to therefore be remembered that each negotiation may require a very different mix of styles each time.

CONFIDENT PROMOTING

Sample's score for this style: -4.00

You will therefore naturally make no use of this style

In this high energy, high empathy quadrant, the individual is likely to want to focus on the people and the process issues equally but to also quickly focus on the key issues pertinent to the negotiation. This style likes to enthuse about the possible forward options and find compromise or win/win agreements that can satisfy as much of both sides needs as possible. This is therefore a flexible or adaptive negotiating style that is always looking for different collaborative ways to reach a deal. The pros and cons of this style are shown on the page overleaf.

Likely Body Language: Erect, slightly leaning forward posture and lots of use of the hands, good eye contact and a confident, usually modulated voice.

Of these four styles, data gathered to date suggests that it is the confident promoting style that is used the most and is adopted more than any other by effective negotiators (who are happy with the end result of their efforts). This is followed by the carefully suggesting style, the pushy bullying style and the quietly manipulating style last. It should be noted however that this is only an 'averaged' finding. It needs to therefore be remembered that each negotiation may require a very different mix of styles each time.

QUIETLY MANIPULATING

Sample's score for this style: 2.00

You will therefore naturally make some use of this style

In this low energy, low empathy quadrant, the individual is likely to keep a relatively 'low profile' much of the time but actively plan how to quietly manipulate the other party to reveal a weakness or to make an enforced concession of some sort. To do this, the style may look to distort or 'bend' information to suit their own ends. This style is seen to be secretive and coercive and therefore not a welcome behavior for other negotiators to deal with, presuming that they can spot it of course! The pros and cons of this style are shown on the page overleaf.

Likely Body Language: Slouched, leaning back, hands clasped or steepled. Eyes averted or watching the broad scene with fleeting looks.

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CAREFULLY SUGGESTING

Sample's score for this style: 3.00

You will therefore naturally make some use of this style

In this low energy, high empathy quadrant, the individual is likely to make calm and harmonious contributions to the negotiations by offering fairly gentle suggestions about how the negotiations can be progressed on a friendly basis or on points about which the two parties can agree. This style is interested in protecting the quality of the relationships and not necessarily at reaching a specific outcome. This style is seen to be highly accommodating and can be used freely particular in the middle of negotiations to get people calmly talking about options. The pros and cons of this style are shown on the page overleaf.

Likely Body Language: Open, neutral posture, attentive, good eye contact, friendly, smiling face, some use of hands when speaking and concentrating, so as to listen properly.

Of these four styles, data gathered to date suggests that it is the confident promoting style that is used the most and is adopted more than any other by effective negotiators (who are happy with the end result of their efforts). This is followed by the carefully suggesting style, the pushy bullying style and the quietly manipulating style last. It should be noted however that this is only an 'averaged' finding. It needs to therefore be remembered that each negotiation may require a very different mix of styles each time.



Communication Styles Used in Negotiation

PUSHY BULLYING DOMINANT STYLES

Pros

- Loudly commands attention on a key point
- Draws negotiations to a rapid close
- Can move negotiations from a stalemate

Cons

- Are often insensitive and miss subtle points
- May adopt a 'take it or leave it' attitude
- Can lead to win/lose outcomes

CAREFULLY SUGGESTING DOMINANT STYLES

Pros

- Keeps the negotiation calm
- Good at drawing attention to the 'deeper' issues
- Can get people to 'open up'

Cons

- Might not commit to convincing the other side
- Might enjoy the negotiation process more than reaching an agreement
- Might lead the negotiations away from the real issues

CONFIDENT PROMOTING DOMINANT STYLES

Pros

- Quickly focuses on the major issues
- Wins people over with enthusiasm
- Usually adapts flexibly to reach a deal

Cons

- Can be too aggressive
- Can fail to listen fully

QUIETLY MANIPULATING DOMINANT STYLES

Pros

- Quickly draws attention to real threats to agreement
- Can subtly focus a debate
- Can raise hidden issues

Cons

- May distort information or the truth
- Can exploit other party's weaknesses
- Can lead to victim/rescuer situations



Your Individual Score

Now that your individual score had been plotted, you should be in a position to:

- **Review the balance of styles that you draw upon when you negotiate (at the moment).**
- **Compare your mix of negotiating styles with the effective negotiation average 'diamond' shape profile.**
- **Determine whether you should look to adjust your style or to practice making more use of styles other than your current primary style, to achieve better future results.**

As we said at the outset, there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers in negotiating. This is partly because every negotiation is highly individualistic. As such, every person needs to select a style that is both comfortable for them, and is likely to work in the particular situation. After all, negotiating over the price of a souvenir when on holiday is likely to require a very different negotiating style (perhaps more 'pushy bullying') than negotiating with your boss over a pay rise (perhaps more 'carefully suggesting').

In the final analysis, the essential value in any measurement instrument is in the extent to which it provides a useful indicator of your personal way of operating. This should ideally be helpful in a way that individuals can reflect upon and judge whether any adjustments or changes are necessary or desirable.

By completing this profile, the intensity of your scores should provide a useful basis for such a review to take place. To deepen or extend this further, you may want to ask two or three of your colleagues to complete the profile as they see your negotiating style. By averaging their scores and plotting them on the grid, this can create an interesting comparison between your own perceived personal style and the style that others perceive you to practice when negotiating.

Whatever your scores, and whether they are yours alone or enhanced by the views of others, you may want to develop your skills in quadrants other than the one in which you are already strongest



Developing Your Negotiating Skills

PUSHY BULLYING	CONFIDENT PROMOTING
Positive ways to use this style:	Positive ways to use this style:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make your points more directly in a louder more confident voice • Tolerate being interrupted less often - practice saying 'Could you please let me finish?' • Look for opportunities to close negotiations on your own terms as often as possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look to take charge of the overall process side of the negotiation • Find small ways to empathize with the other party - practice saying 'I can appreciate your position on this.' • Practice making proposals of ideas and suggestions with as much enthusiasm as you can muster. • Aim to be flexible to adapt your position when the logic is clear. • Look for opportunities to find solutions that represent a 'win' for both parties
QUIETLY MANIPULATING	CAREFULLY SUGGESTING
Positive ways to use this style:	Positive ways to use this style:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim to look for the underlying reasons or motivations for the points made by the other party - practice saying 'What motivates you to say this?' • Learn to watch and interpret body language more often • Don't openly offer all the data at once - hold back key points for a time when they can make most impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to play the role of calm and assured voice of reason and keeper of positive relationships • Invite the other party to take a deeper and longer term view • Practice concentrating on points of agreement ahead of points of difference • Look to explain your points carefully and in an assured way - practice saying 'Let me summarize what I am suggesting.'



Applying Your Negotiating Skills

Whether the negotiation 'event' is intended to last for 2 minutes or 2 hours, it is important to approach it in the same calm and measured way. In fact, a vast number of negotiations simply fail because the initial attitude of mind was poor or negative. This can include:

- Anger/hostility
- Vindictiveness
- Annoyance
- Impatience
- Distraction/lack of attention... to name but a few!!

Particularly in dispute negotiations, such poor states of mind often lead to a complete disrespect for not only the other person in terms of common courtesy but for the whole negotiation process itself (seeing it as a frustrating waste of time and not worth the effort). In the end, it is up to both parties to both self govern their behavior, but also hold each other accountable for showing open respect for each other and what they are trying to achieve. Many people that have been involved in management/union negotiations know that any hostile behavior at the outset, must disappear in order for real and practical progress of any sort to be made. This often means trying to get beyond what might be Pushy Bullying or Quietly Manipulating behavior.

Even if the state of mind is calm and ready, many negotiators can make the mistake of opening the conversation with a hostile statement or at least a controversial one (thus destroying any chance of empathy in an instant). One real example of this was heard once again in a management/union negotiation where one of the management side's opening statements began 'we all know that shop floor people are pretty lazy' - not surprisingly, It took a long time to getting discussions back on an 'even keel' after this provocative remark.

Neutral opening statements, always help to build rapport by avoiding any controversial issues and even finding some common ground very early on (however trivial this may be). Remarks about the weather, the weekend's sport, upcoming holidays or even general health and well-being are the most common examples of neutral subjects. Even better, a little light humor can work wonders in settling down any nervous expectation (but once again, take care not to offend). Of course this is to make use of the Carefully Suggesting style, even if it is only for a short time.

Whilst you are in this pleasant and comfortable rapport building stage, it is possible to smoothly move on to how you see the negotiation process 'unfolding'. Although this may cover how much time may be available and some very broad goals from the meeting, these process remarks can be used to emphasize the anticipated common ground that already exists. An example might be -'Perhaps we can start by thanking Fiona and John for their excellent preparation work on behalf of both sides prior to this meeting - I'm sure we all agree that it has taken us a long way forward!'

Note: Neutral venues for the negotiation can also help to build rapport as the overtones of your place or theirs are avoided. Such 'physical' factors are important not to forget, as they often play quite a powerful role in the mental psychology of negotiating. Walking into 'home' territory often puts pressure on the 'home side' to perform or 'play to the gallery'. This is why so many arbitration disputes always choose a neutral territory.



Reading and Using Negotiating “Ploys”

We have already suggested that negotiation can be quite a formal and even 'ritualistic' form of communication. This is particularly evident as the verbal bartering and bantering start to look almost like a 'dance' without music (particularly as both sides use 'if, then' statements a lot). However, it is important to remember that the words of the negotiation are not the only signal about what is being proposed. This may come in the form of the more hidden or subtle meanings that are communicated or what is said 'between the lines'.

Here are a few examples:

- I think we're there** (almost, just one more small request I'd like you to agree to)
- I'm sure you are a reasonable person** (trust me - I am completely reasonable)
- Look, to be entirely honest** (I don't like what you've just said at all)
- Yes, that's much better for both of us** (it's much better for me than you)
- It would be very hard to concede that** (I'm ready to concede it if you make a high enough offer)
- Not at this stage** (make the same offer later)
- We cannot discount the price by 15%** (would you accept 10%?)

Of course individuals that have a strong preference for a particular style in the negotiating style grid are likely to have their own negotiating 'ploys' that will often match their general preferences and communication characteristics. Although both the Confident Promoting and Carefully Suggesting styles will therefore use their own ploys, it is the Pushy Bullying and Quietly Manipulating styles that use ploys the most (because they are low on the level of empathy scale and are therefore less concerned about the potential negative impact that ploys may have on the relationship with the other party).

Apart from words, the negotiating arena is likely to see the use of some tell-tale body language as well as some particular behavioral traits. Unfortunately, as emotional 'animals', both negotiating parties are likely to be communicating through body language, so you have to guard your own behavior and watch the other party (who will also be watching you) at the same time. A useful grid

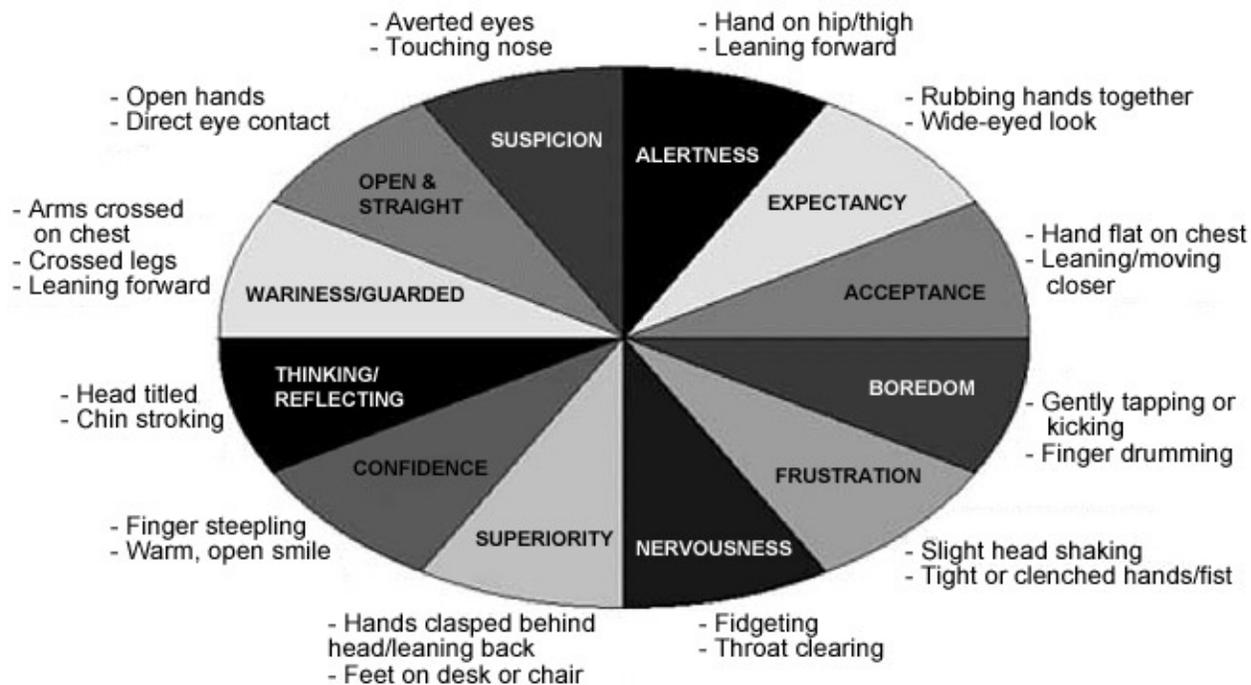
Body Language :

	INTENDED	UNINTENDED	IMPLICATION
MINE			
YOURS			

You can use this chart to note any body signals that you or they use to guess what you think it means. This is a fallible process but often quite a revealing one.



Negotiating Body Language to Look Out For



Learning how to read negotiation ploys and to use them confidently yourself will take considerable practice in always getting to your minimum negotiating goals. However, the following is a list of some of them:

- **Flagging**
- **Hypothesizing**
- **Summarizing**
- **Defending**
- **Physiological attacks**
- **Qualifying**
- **Cornering**
- **Grandstanding**

FLAGGING

Flagging simply means signaling about a possible direction for the negotiation indirectly. 'Could I, may I, I'd suggest' are simple examples. Some negotiators even develop physical flags (e.g., when they fiddle with their tie they are going to offer something of real value to them).

SUMMARIZING

Summarizing just means regularly summarizing the progress of the negotiation. It puts the summarizer in control and often tests understanding (or avoids misinterpretation). 'So, is it fair to summarize the position in the following way?'

PSYCHOLOGICAL ATTACKS

This is a behavioral distraction tactic usually used to divert attention from an issue or to play for time. This often means quite deliberately demanding a concession (coercively) that you may not really want. Another favorite is pretending not to understand what is being said - 'I'm sorry, I need you to agree to my request for a 50% down payment before we can continue this discussion.'

CORNERING

Cornering means making an offer to which the other party has little or no alternative but to agree - they literally are cornered and have nowhere to go (or look foolish, uncertain, etc). 'This offer meets both of your criteria of being entirely reasonable and more than we were offering last time - don't you agree?'

HYPOTHESIZING

This is another distraction tactic allowing a theoretical offer or suggestion to be 'floated' without committing to it just yet, so as to test the water or gauge the reaction of the other party. 'Let's say for the sake of argument that I could meet all of your requests - what would I get in return?'

DEFENDING

Defending is usually used as a stubborn 'put up the walls' approach to defend against a highly persuasive or even coercive other party - it creates thinking/reflection time and is intended to frustrate the other side - 'I'm sorry, I've been doing most of the moving to meet your demands. Not another inch until you concede a few things.'

QUALIFYING

Qualifying is a holding or stalling negotiating technique suggesting that the other side's offer needs a little bit of adjustment to make it acceptable or to qualify for being conceded - 'As things stand right now, I couldn't sign the document with that final clause in it.' (meaning remove or change it and I'll sign immediately).

GRANDSTANDING

Grandstanding often involves making statements intended for public consumption or what is sometimes called 'playing to the gallery'. Although most negotiators will use the technique when there is an audience, in a one to one it can be distracting when a negotiator claims in a loud voice and standing up 'You cannot be serious.' (after all it served the tennis player - Jon McEnroe well!).



Pulling It All Together

Negotiating involves at least two main aspects. The first is the nature or the context of the negotiation itself. This might be to bargain on the value of something in a purchase, to settle a difference of some sort or to find a compromise solution to move forward. Secondly, a negotiation involves the adoption of a particular style or behavioral approach by both parties. These 'styles' may be the same or they may be very different. In either case, it is valuable to understand how these different styles are likely to make an impact on a negotiation (whether it is your own preferred style or that of the other party).

The Negotiating Style instrument focuses mainly on this second aspect of negotiating and hopefully gives individuals an insight into the variety of behavioral approaches that they might adopt in the future.



My Contract For Change

Here is a link to a 12 page workbook that can help you further - <http://assessments24x7.com/rsb/RSBns.pdf>

1. My personal goals to Negotiate more effectively in the future are :

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____

2. As a result I will make more time to achieve the goals by giving less priority to:

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____

3. Each week I will record my progress by _____

4. My support person(s) will be _____

5. My support person(s) will help me by _____

6. I will use the following methods to maintain my momentum and learn along the way:

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____

7. I will reward myself for achieving my milestones by _____

8. My end reward will be _____

Signed _____ Dated _____