

QUICK CHECKLIST NEGOTIATIONS

1. Be prepared to walk away, but don't walk away first

This should help keep the scarcity mentality and hence anxiety in check, which will often lead to failure. If you decide to leave the deal, let the other side walk away first to maximise the chances of the deal still being concluded sometime later. Always try to leave the door open.

2. Don't play games; call a spade a spade

Don't play other people's games and don't play games yourself. If you notice the other side tries to pull tricks on you, call it out calmly and politely and set things straight in a constructive manner. You want to continue, but you don't want to waste your time and energy with unreasonable behaviour. Moreover, it will help you avoid being defensive.

3. Patience

After decades of negotiating, I think this is the most important point. Stay in it as long as possible, let the other party calm down and understand you are open to reason and you do not think in positions or win/lose criteria. It takes time. Moreover, it is the best means to deal with hard bargainers or aggressive opponents. Some of them improve after they understand their tactics are not working.

4. Always be open to reason

You don't want to win a war; you want to have a deal. Don't think in terms of positions; think in terms of (achievable) aims. Never let your emotions have a say.

5. Circumvent stumbling blocks

If there's a stumbling block, put it aside and negotiate around it for the time being. Return to it later. With a substantial number of points agreed upon, chances are the other side will become more amenable to a compromise.

6. Eliminate all signs of resentment

Keep your distance but never show you are annoyed or even resentful. Maximise your chances of success at every turn. Let your partner understand you are ruled not by emotions but by reason.

7. Know what you offer and what you expect as precisely as humanely possible

This is a truism, but suprisingly, sluggishness tends to creep into the preparation, especially if you have developed a routine. Stay sharp and go over the key points of your offer. Know where your red lines are and when you will walk away.

Conclusion

In my view, it all boils down to expertise, patience and integrity.

Your suggestions

If you have any suggestions as to how we can improve this checklist, you are very welcome to write us an email at: schneider@schneiderlegal.de

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