Consideration Toward People in Doing Negotiation

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1. Introduction

Negotiation depends on people. People is everything, and people is the most important in doing negotiation. We cannot, therefore, deliver any message when the other person is not ready to listen to us. Who is the most important person when we negotiate? It is the person in front of you. Among all the negotiators, the priority order is as follows: (1) The person you are negotiating with; (2) The third person; and (3) finally yourself.

When we feel, we are listened to and are respected by the person we are negotiating with, we feel like offering something that will satisfy the needs of that person. When trust is build up between each other before doing negotiation, that is a lot better. We need to build, however, a working relationship before doing any negotiation. Even though you reach an agreement without having a working relationship, the result will not be a satisfying one for both or for either party and the agreement will not last long.

2. Building Working Relationship with the Other Party

Since the first priority goes to the person in front of you, sensitivity and
personality of the other party will dominate the negotiation. It is, therefore, vital to pay attention to the emotional aspect of the person you are negotiating. We need to think “how the other person is feeling?” and “how is he/she observing and interpreting the situation?” People are different and all unique. The same person can be different by the day and can be different by the time even on the same day. That is why we need to pay close attention to (1) what he/she thinks; (2) how he/she is trying to perceive the negotiation; and (3) how he/she is feeling. The starting point in doing negotiation is to look into the head of the other party.

The list of the proposals, which will be given to the other party, is our proposal. When we find any problem during negotiation, they are not only the problems of the other person but also our problems, which need to be solved in order to satisfy needs and/or interests of both parties.

Listening comes first before trust. By doing active listening in order to understand the other person, and when the other person perceives that you are seriously interested in knowing him/her, he/she will start listening to what you say. When both parties listen to each other, a working relationship can be established. Through having a working relationship, trust can be build up between each other. By establishing a good working relationship with trust, the negotiation will move smoother and more effective. If they like each other plus the working relationship and trust, the situation will become a lot better.

During negotiation, the ideal process can be as follows: (1) Each of them try to learn each other’s rational and emotional needs by seriously and sincerely listening to each other; (2) Consensus is built on what to negotiate; and (3) Sincere attitude toward each other has been maintained or improved. Data, facts, statistics, and substance are part of negotiation, and they are not dominant factors. A well-established working relationship is far more important than those. When you find that you are not getting along with the other party, it will be effective to take a break in order to communicate to build a working relationship and to restore relationship by communication. Reaching agreement is difficult without working relationship, and when the agreement is established without a working relationship, that
agreement may not last long. To respect the other person is one of the keys to satisfy our needs. When people feel they are respected by you, they tend to try to do something good to you in return.

The most important thing for negotiators is to understand the picture in the head of the other party. To find out the picture in his/her head will become the starting point to change his/her idea. Then how it becomes possible? We need to (1) respect his/her judgement; (2) respect the time and effort he/she had spent for the career; and (3) express the respect toward him/her sincerely from the heart. We need to make him/her perceive that you respect him/her. Sincere attitude toward him/her will work.

How can we build trust with the other party? We need to continue to talk with him/her. By communication, we try to understand what he/she is thinking and his/her feelings by getting into his/her head. To know him/her, a little chitchat is recommended. You do this because you are interested to know him/her. To get closer and to draw his/her attention, we need to show a genuine interest in him/her in order to invite him/her to communicate. We need to show full of curiosity to know him/her as a person.

In order to achieve the goal, to bring in a third person to the negotiating table can be effective. The third person is the one who can affect the decision of the negotiator, and he/she can be alive or dead or can be an imaginary existence.

Who is the most appropriate negotiator? Is CEO the only person who has power in doing negotiation? CEO or the person with a lot of negotiation experience is not necessarily the best person to be at the negotiating table. A person, who has power or authority, may not pay careful attention to the needs of the other party. He/she may not be good at listening actively of what the other party says, so he/she may not be good at expanding the size of the pie. To select the best person as a negotiator, we need to find who is the best person to achieve the objective. He/she can be the person who can influence the decision-maker.

Sometimes it is effective to give power to the other party. We can ask for help directly to him/her. We can appeal to sympathy, and involved him/her
to solve the problem. In this way he/she feels that you give him/her power. When the other party feels good by receiving power from you, he/she may help you proactively.

3. Trust in Negotiation

Trust is important in human relationships. The compensation of no trust is fatal; however, the outcome which trust brings is immeasurable.

Let us get into the dynamics of trust. What is trust? Trust is a feeling of security that the other party will protect you. Since he/she cares about you, you have a feeling of security that he/she will not monopolize the outcome. When the risk is manageable to him/her, and until a better opportunity comes to him/her, he/she protects you to some extent. When trust is very deep, he/she tries to help you even he/she gets some damage by helping you. In order to build trust, we need to be diligent with sincerity and with an open heart. When both sides trust each other, we can say that there is trust in negotiation.

The opposite of trust is (1) insincerity; (2) to tell a lie; and (3) all acts that are going to deceive him/her. The following can be considered as the opposite of trust: (1) hide the fact and give wrong impression; (2) try to manipulate his/her feelings and/or emotions; (3) give wrong information; (4) make threats; (5) make a promise without having an idea to carry it out; (6) intentionally damage his/her reliability by delivering wrong information to other people, etc.

It takes time to build trust because trust is based on mutual respect, ethics, and goodwill. Positive emotional contemplation exist between each other. When a person, who we do not know very well, says to trust him/her, we need to politely ask that person the reason of why he/she can say that. Trust cannot be build up in a short period. Quantity of giving information to other people depends on the degree of trust, but of course we do not need to tell everything. Not telling everything is different from telling a lie.

When we feel uncomfortable toward relationship or cannot fully trust the other party, we should not take an insincere reaction even to an insincere and/or unfaithful person. By taking an insincere reaction, we will lose trust.
by others. We do not have to take any action to lose trust, and it is necessary for us to avoid to be regarded as an insincere and/or unfaithful person. Lie, trick and bluff will invite discord and distrust by people who have high moral sense. You will notice when other people in their organization say different things. We will be able to point out by using contradictions, which are created by lie, trick and bluff.

4. Emotion and Feeling

Emotion and feeling are different. Emotion is specific, intense and long-lasting. On the other hand, feeling is not specific, not intense like emotion and its duration is shorter than emotion.

When emotion is positive, a person is favorable to a counterpart, satisfies with the development, progress and result of negotiation, and is possible to move toward win-win negotiation. Positive attitude toward the counterpart will be able to create trust between the parties, and the procedure of the negotiation will become fair. Both parties will be able to objectively prove the good result. There are not, however, only good aspects on positive emotion. Problems on positive emotion is that a person tends to become too kind to accept the claims, proposals and ideas of the counterpart. As a result, the type of negotiation will become win-lose, and the nice and soft person with a positive emotion will become a loser and will regret the outcome of the negotiation.

Negative feelings are discourage based on frustration and dissatisfaction. Unrest or restlessness come based on worry, fear, and threat. When this is the case, the negotiator may feel like withdrawing from the negotiation, feel like fighting back to the other side or retaliating against the other party. Here the negotiation game becomes win-lose. When negotiation becomes a win-lose game, the negotiators lose interest and try to avoid to cope with the original assignments of the negotiation. This will intensify the confrontation of both parties, and poor judgment will be made by both parties instead of seeking the benefit of both parties. The only way to get out from the win-lose negotiation game without having a third party is when either one of the parties select to play the win-win negotiation game. This can turn the negoti-
ation to a positive one. The relationship problem between the two can turn into a cooperative collaboration in order to solve the problem.

We need to thus keep an eye on feelings. We need to adjust the message to the counterpart by controlling our emotion, and we have to pay attention to emotions before they become a people problem.

References


