

Negotiating with difficult people

Guidelines

- Don't do what most people do (i.e.: start to behave in the same way as the "difficult" person; give in or walk away)
- Disarm them
 - Step to their side and treat them respectfully (≠ giving in)
 - Stay focused on your goals and interests, but don't provoke
 - Try hard to understand what lies behind their attitude, i.e.: the good reasons they have to behave the way they do (≠ agree)
 - Ask open, problem-solving questions (e.g. why? why not? what if?) and listen actively
 - Ask for their advice
 - Acknowledge their feelings
 - If you made a mistake, say sorry (≠ self-blame)
- Build them a golden bridge
 - Ask for and build on their ideas
 - Ask for constructive criticism
 - Formulate yesable propositions
 - Help them save face
 - Think as a mediator would

- Bring them to their senses, not their knees
 - Make it hard for them to say no
 - Ask reality-testing questions ("What do you think will happen if we don't agree?")
 - Demonstrate your BATNA (warn, don't threaten!)
 - Let them choose; don't try to force them
 - Don't withdraw your last best offer

Negotiate about the negotiation

Go to the balcony and then:

<u>Relationship</u>	<i>I have a problem with the way we are negotiating together. I need to discuss it with you.</i>
<u>Perception</u>	<i>This is what I observed („We-statements“). What did you observe?</i>
<u>Interest</u>	<i>How would you like this negotiation to proceed and why?</i>
<u>Options</u>	<i>How could we improve the negotiation process?</i>
<u>Standards</u>	<i>What are the ground rules that we may both want like to respect?</i>

Source: William Ury, *Getting Past No – Negotiating with difficult people*, Random House / Business Books