

# Requirements of a Successful Relationship Strategy

---

Independent of disagreement. In no way should a relationship strategy require substantive agreement. It is precisely when disagreements are the most serious that we need a functioning working relationship to cope with them.

Independent of concessions. A relationship strategy should not require us to give in nor demand that others do so.

Independent of partisan perceptions. A relationship strategy cannot rest on the premise that we see the truth and they are wrong. It is impossible to build a relationship on the premise that the other side is always wrong.

Independent of reciprocity. A relationship strategy should not require that the other side engages in exemplary behavior, nor should it rest on the premise that our example will be followed.

Independent of permanent sides. A relationship strategy should leave us open to revisiting our views about who is on our side and who is not.

## Conclusion:

- \* a relationship strategy must be unconditionally constructive, i.e. one has to stick to it whether or not the other side follows the same guidelines  
*and at the same time*
- \* it has to be counterbalanced by a very firm determination to pursue or protect one's own legitimate interests.

Source: Roger Fisher, Scott Brown: *Getting Together – Building Relationships As We Negotiate* (Penguin Books, 1989)