

## A Sumbiosis Think Piece

### Charlene Barshefsky – Self-Management

The issue of the "Negotiation Journal" published in the spring of 2020 is devoted to the topic "Critical Moments in Negotiation". In the introduction<sup>1</sup>, the author mentions an episode that occurred in the nineties during a tense trade negotiation between the People's Republic of China and the United States of America.

At two o'clock in the morning, the head of the Chinese delegation suddenly stood up, banged his fist on the table and threatened the US Trade Representative, Charlene Barshefsky, with the words: "Now it's enough: Take it or leave it"!

Charlene Barshefski comments this episode in a highly interesting video interview:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/q9xyzpwhjcrkekn/Barshefsky%20lunge.mp4?dl=0>

This interview shows how self-management plays a fundamental role in negotiation. The ability of Charlene Barshefsky to observe and act in a calm and focused manner while under extreme stress and pressure is brilliant. She was able to observe the body language and facial expression of her Chinese counterpart, to draw the right conclusions and to react in a level-headed and de-escalating way.

An impressive example of highly skilled negotiation behavior at the highest level!

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<sup>1</sup> Joel Cutcher-Gershenfeld, [Editor's Note](#), Negotiation Journal, Volume 36, Number 2, Spring 2017 (on file)