

Must-Do Tips No 50 – Essential Negotiation Part 2

Facts gathered, braced for talk about money, and with empathic antennae fully tuned, what should your professionals do when engaged in negotiation with a client? What they can actually do is often less than edifying - **give in** or sometimes **dig in** (their heels). Usually, neither course of action delivers a good outcome for both parties. Here are three suggestions to help smooth the path to a better outcome.

Tip 1 - Do Not Justify

In a difficult negotiating position, some professionals revert to what they have been trained to do - they defend it. Arguments are proffered, opinions ignored - in the worst cases, flying in the face of reason and common sense. Especially for sensitive scenarios, this is a recipe for an angry client. Frankly, such competitive, 'right thinking' individuals need their instincts re-conditioned to **BUTTON IT** and engage brain so that client anger is avoided.

Tip 2 - Interests Not Positions

This is THE fundamental principle to best practice negotiation from probably the most authoritative writers on the subject*. Their contention is that most negotiations focus on the positions that people take (e.g. "we want a 10% reduction in fees across the board") - often to the detriment of any wisdom in the outcome. Usually, this means that one party gets shafted. By broadening the discussions to explore fully what lies behind such a demand (the 'interests' of the other party), the negotiating pitch gets widened, enabling the generation of more options that *both* parties can live with: and the possibility of a 'win-win' solution potentially hoves into view.

* Roger Fisher and William Ury in their excellent book "Getting to Yes"

Tip 3 - ALIA (Ask..Listen..Interpret..Ask)

Accepting the principle espoused in Tip 2, a more sophisticated skill-set is required for our negotiators. Yes, they have to be asking good questions ('open' and 'closed' ones)....and then listening acutely for what lies behind the answers they get. For the ambiguities and interpretations that need to be probed and clarified. Then ask more questions and interpret more until the full picture of the other party's interests is revealed! Sounds simple, but it doesn't come easy to many.

People Scope has successful experience of helping professionals to negotiate better. For more information hit 'Reply' and type **Effective Negotiation #2**.

The incentivisation of professionals to build better client relationships will be part of a forthcoming People Scope CRM Resource Paper entitled "**Motivating professionals to succeed**". To pre-register for your free copy, hit 'Reply' and type **Motivating Professionals**.

Of course you could always:

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Best regards.

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