

THE EFFECTIVE NEGOTIATOR

Effective negotiators, whether they be cooperative or intimidators have been found to share some traits in common. The following list shows the main qualities of effective negotiators:

- Self-controlled.
- Focused on the objectives of the transaction.
- Removed emotionally from the issues.
- Patient with the process.
- Skillful in reading the clues and the issues
- Prepared on the facts and the issues.

What you do with your negotiating style is the most important. The approach that you use is irrelevant. Whether you are a cooperative or intimidation negotiator, here are some suggestions that work:

- Remain self-controlled and dignified. Avoid displaying emotions during the negotiations. When the negotiator keeps a distance between themselves and the problem, the process really works.
- Remember the objective of the transaction. Ask yourself throughout the negotiations, “Why am I here?” and “What was I sent here to accomplish?”
- Be honest. It is only in being honest that real progress can be made towards reestablishing trust and respect.
- Be aware of your faults. If you are cooperative, do not give away all the facts of the case searching in vain for reciprocity. If you are an intimidator, remember to be open to new ideas and remain flexible.
- Listen to what your opponent is saying and clarify the reasons for the demands made. When the reasons are clarified and re-clarified, it avoids the possibility of misrepresentation.
- Be patient with the process of negotiating. Sometimes it takes a long time. The goal is to reach an agreement before the deadline. This can take two hours, two months or two years.
- Be prepared on the facts, figures and issues and those of your opponent. Have I done my homework? For example, knowing the past history of the related deals involved in the dispute can be helpful during the negotiations because most people will avoid at all cost making the same mistake twice.

It is in opening ourselves to how other see the world that we gain understanding. It is through this understanding that we learn to be effective negotiators. Therefore, some questions need to be answered: Why are we not negotiating everything successfully? What are our weaknesses? What do we need to learn about ourselves in order to become effective?