

NEGOTIATING YOUR WAY THROUGH LIFE

By Jim Verdonik

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Do you take whatever life offers you?

Or do you try to negotiate a better deal?

How successful are you?

The success or failure of any business or project may depend on your negotiating skills.

That's doubly true for young businesses. If you can't get more for less, you may be headed for the dustbin of history.

Like most attorneys, I make my living by negotiating.

But, like the saying that "War is too important to be left to the Generals," negotiating is too important to be left to the lawyers.

Negotiating is a team sport.

Successful negotiations require communication and teamwork between clients and lawyers.

For businesses, successful negotiations often require cooperation among many different departments.

But can everyone be a successful negotiator?

Are great negotiators born?

Or can you train yourself to be a great negotiator?

What's the best negotiating style?

We'll briefly explore these and other negotiating questions as we talk about how to negotiate your way through life.

By the way, it's no accident that I started this article by asking lots of questions. Questions are vital tools of the trade of successful negotiators.

- Preachers need their Holy Books.
- Gun fighters need their guns.
- Carpenters need their hammers and saws.

Great negotiators come armed with questions.

Let's jump into exploring the keys in successful negotiation with this video about negotiating styles.

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Of course, negotiating style only gets you so far.

Style is worthless without strategy.

What's your negotiating strategy?

Ultimately, negotiating involves selling. Instead of just selling a product, you may be selling a concept or a relationship.

But how do you sell?

How do you build selling into your negotiation?

When my daughter was in elementary school, I brought her to a university to hear a successful entrepreneur share the secrets of his success with college students. His primary theme was:

- It's wrong to think that the world is full of people who are your friends.
- It's wrong to think that the world is full of people who are your enemies.
- The key to success is to understand that people are busy with their lives. They're too busy to care about you. Your primary job is to convince people they should care about you.

Bringing my daughter to hear that was one of the best things I did as a father. I've tried to make sure my daughter never forgets that lesson.

One reason that advice resonated with me is that it reminded me of something my mother taught me about negotiating when I was about 11 years old. Let's explore how Mom taught me to negotiate in this video.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ATiVcTqnD7M&list=PLEyL-gjb9p8yqMcjg4lsrt8r69XYcSU7Q&index=9>

Of course, not all negotiations are friendly.

You may be thrown into a negotiation together with someone in a life and death struggle that neither side really wants to be in, but both sides are desperate to win.

Life isn't always full of happy endings. Sometimes the best thing you can do to is to negotiate your way out of a disaster.

As negotiators, we often try to resolve differences by compromising.

But sometimes compromise isn't possible.

What do you do to solve your negotiating problem, when the other side is prepared to go nuclear if they don't get what they want, but giving them what they want will destroy your business?

Let's see in this video clip how we deal with really intense struggles by changing the other side's perception of reality.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zpU8my5qj80&list=PLEyL-gjb9p8yqMcjg4lsrt8r69XYcSU7Q&index=10>

So far, we've focused on style, tactics and strategy.

But it helps to have the facts or the law or both on your side.

In the Civil War, whichever side marched across open fields to confront an entrenched army holding the high ground, usually lost a very lopsided battle. Positioning was a key to success.

Facts about terrain and the ability to deliver explosives and steel on a vulnerable opponent while your army was shielded were just too big an advantage for either side to overcome.

Whenever Generals forgot these simple facts, their armies paid a bloody price.

Let's look at a similar negotiation in which I realized my client had the high ground and the other side foolishly charged ahead into the storm.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a8dWJ41dIOU&list=PLEyL-gjb9p8yqMcjg4lsrt8r69XYcSU7Q&index=11>

I'd like to think that all negotiations can be won – or at least that both sides will agree on a reasonable compromise that gets each side most of what they want. We do the best we can to achieve that. We dig into our bag of negotiating strategies. But sometimes the two sides are separated by wide gaps. They want very different things. Let's talk about some strategies to bridge gaps between buyers and sellers that sometimes work and sometimes fail.

["http://player.vimeo.com/video/55982745?title=0&byline=0&portrait=0&badge=0"](http://player.vimeo.com/video/55982745?title=0&byline=0&portrait=0&badge=0)

So, we've spent this time together talking about different negotiating goals, strategies, styles and tactics.

Let's summarize what we've learned about negotiating.

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Before we go, do you have any negotiating tips for me?

If you would like to learn more about negotiating or other issues important to your success, you can reach me at JFV@WardandSmith.com or JimV@ElearnSuccess.com. Or you can check out my eLearning

course at www.elearnSuccess.com or www.YouTube.com/eLearnSucess or purchase my books at <http://www.amazon.com/Jim-Verdonik/e/B0040GUBRW>

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