

Chapter 5:

Two Negotiating Styles

At the store, a child negotiates with her mother for a new toy. Two sisters, each wanting to have the family Christmas dinner at their home, negotiate with each other where the dinner will be held. A wife, wanting the family to spend their entire vacation with her parents negotiates the matter with her husband. Life probably has thrown thousands of such negotiating opportunities to every individual. Sadly, however, even in the light of such opportunity, not many of us have turned out to be *great negotiators*.

One of the reasons for this failure is due to the limited number of negotiating styles available to us. There are basically only two styles used in any type of negotiation. The style used most often is more of a competitive style. The style used the least but perhaps the most effective is the collaborative style approach.

With white knuckles and a blood curdling scream, the child in the store is clearly *competing* with every ounce of energy to win the negotiation. The Christmas dinner negotiation may not be as tense, but depending on the family dynamic one sibling may come away feeling that they once again lost to the *competitive* manipulation of their older sibling. Hopefully, the negotiation between the couple ended successfully. However, if *competitive* negotiations are the only style of negotiating this couple is familiar with, there was probably some tension and one of the spouses felt they lost the negotiation and the other spouse won.

The result of every negotiation will fall somewhere in one of four categories.

1. You Win/They Lose
2. They Win/You Lose
3. You Lose/They Lose
4. You Win/They Win

Each of the specific outcomes is a direct result of the type of negotiation (competitive or collaborative) used.

Characteristics of Competitive Negotiations

If competitive negotiations had been used in each of the three examples, the outcome would have ended either with a win/lose, lose/win or lose/lose conclusion. The reason is because the parties would have treated the process as a competition that was either going to be won or lost. Much like any sports contest, each team has one goal in mind. If they win the other team loses. If they lose, the other team wins.

A competitive person hates to lose and will do almost anything to win. As true as that is in sports, it is equally true in many business and personal negotiations. At times, a person's competitive spirit will chuck the rulebook completely. Heavy handedness, an escalating voice, shading the truth, verbal abuse, name-calling, demeaning the other person and/or belittling their ideas can all become acceptable behavior. Both parties try to overpower the other in an attempt to *win* the negotiation. Winning is very important and, as a result, competitive style negotiations has four predictable characteristics.

1. *Position based* – First and foremost, this type of negotiation is *position based*. The toddler at the store came to the negotiation with a certain *position* in mind. Both sisters, arguing over Christmas dinner, came to the table with their *position* in mind and the wife wanting to spend the family's vacation with her parents came to the discussion with her *position* in mind. As such, each began to argue their case. They wanted to win and, in many cases, like an attorney arguing a case, they will present several exhibits proving why their *position* is the only position. Entering a negotiation based on one's *position* rather than based on a *goal* can be dangerous and leads to a win/lose scenario.

Approaching a negotiation with a *position based* attitude is like a horse wearing blinders. The horse has limited vision. Since the horse can only see what is directly in front of his eyes, he does not have the ability to see different options or alternatives. So too, a

person wearing blinders while negotiating can only see what is right in front of his or her eyes. Their vision is directed entirely on their *position*.

For many who operate under a *position based* scenario, the smallest compromise will feel like losing the entire negotiation.

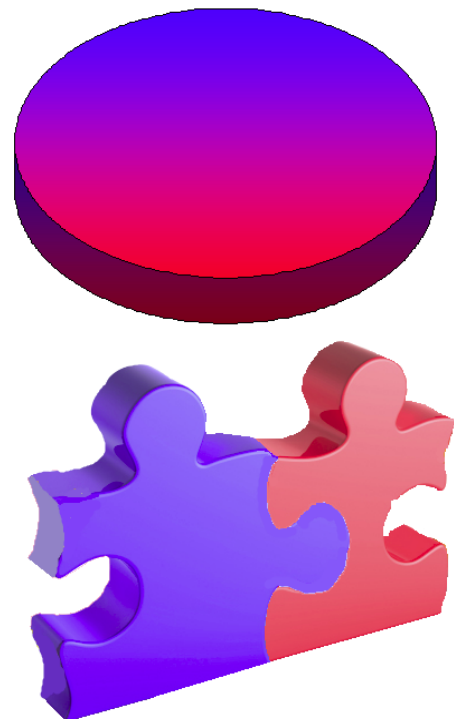
2. *Power oriented* – Because winning is everything, this type of negotiating becomes power oriented. Talking over the other person or interrupting the other person is all a part of the strategy to over power. Getting up and walking out of the room is another tool used to demonstrate, “It is either my way or the highway! Take it or leave it!” We have all seen this type of behavior used in meetings, at home and at the car dealership. Perhaps, we have all used this type of strategy in the past. If so, it was because we were using a competitive negotiating style.
3. *Self motivated* – Building trust with others is perhaps the greatest catalyst for success in negotiations. With a competitive style, trust is not an issue. Competition is purely self motivated. At the time of the negotiation, competition does not care about the other person or the relationship with the other person. It does not care about trust. Or, at the least, it will feign caring about trust as a tool to win. Take the toddler in the store. As the child is screaming, “Buy me this toy!” onlookers are probably thinking the mother is in need of better parenting skills. She is deeply embarrassed but the toddler doesn’t care. To show care for his mother during the negotiation would be to show weakness. And even the toddler knows that weakness is the Achilles heel during a competition. An hour later, the toddler may have his arms around his mother’s neck whispering in her ear, “I wuv you.” Now, however, in the store, his actions are purely self motivated.
4. *Short-term interest* – The fourth characteristic of competitive negotiations is a short-term interest. Because winning is the only goal, no long term relationship is required. Unfortunately, couples who wish to stay together until death do us part, may sacrifice the long-term relationship for the sake of winning the immediate battle. The husband not wanting to spend the family vacation at his in-laws may lose sight of the goal of the marriage during a heated portion of the negotiation. He very well could do long term damage if he began calling his mother-in-law names or citing a litany of past infractions. Again, all he is trying to do is play the part of a prosecuting attorney citing his Exhibits A through Z on why the family should not spend their vacation with the in-laws. For the

man in this situation, the only goal in sight is a short-term goal – win at all cost.

Characteristics of Collaborative Negotiations

A collaborative style negotiation is played out much differently than a competitive style. With this type of negotiation, the outcome will fall into the win/win category. Again, two parties are attempting to negotiate a matter. Each have their own views and opinions on what the outcome should look like; however, their approach will be much different. With this type of negotiation, both parties leave the table feeling they have gained something of significance.

Take the two sisters discussing where Christmas dinner will be held. With competitive negotiations, the older sister will pull out all the stops, cite each of her exhibits. “Mom can’t travel as far this year and my house is closer.” Or “I want to buy prime rib this year instead of turkey and I want to try out a new recipe for my broccoli casserole.” If those tactics don’t work, the sister will resort to stronger exhibits. “When we go to your house, you know your kids are unmanageable and it makes Mom nervous!” or “Fine, you can have Christmas dinner at your house if you want, but I’ve already talked to Mom and she said she was coming to my house!” Collaborative negotiations will use a completely different approach and the reason is because of its motivation. Collaboration is not about winning, it is about *resolving*. Some believe that if they win, the conflict is resolved. Unfortunately, that is not true. Conflict resolution or negotiation resolution is never about winning. It is much more like a picture of a circle. At the top of the circle is a distinctive blue color. At the bottom of the circle is a distinctive red color. As the two colors meet in the middle they become merged together creating a perfect combination. With this type of negotiation, the two sister’s views about Christmas become merged in the middle. This approach values both positions but seeks to alter those positions into a joint collaborative effort with a win/win outcome. Another visual that can be used to grasp this type of negotiation is that of two puzzle pieces.



Each has their own distinctive design and color. Each has their own unique position in the puzzle; however to make the puzzle complete, they must merge together. They must find a perfect fit.

Collaborative negotiations have four predictable characteristics.

1. Goal Based – Whereas, competitive negotiations lead to a win/lose scenario, collaborative based negotiations lead to a win/win outcome. Keeping the *goal* in mind rather than one's *position*, first and foremost, creates an entirely different environment. The parties become more like a team, working together, to accomplish the *goal*.

If the two sisters approached the Christmas dinner conversation with a *goal* in mind rather than their personal opinions in mind, the outcome would be much different. Ask each of them what the *goal* is and the answer would probably be the same. "We want to build a Christmas memory for everyone," they might say. "This might be Mom's last Christmas with us," one of the sister's might add, "What can we do to make this the best Christmas ever?" With this type of negotiation, often the person's *position* is lost when the vision of the *goal* becomes clear.

Take the blinders off of a horse and the animal can now see and evaluate many different options. His vision is no longer limited to what is directly in front of his eyes. The horse is now free to go in several directions. The same is true for a person. Having a *position based* mindset is like wearing blinders. Having a *goal based* mindset is like taking the blinders off. The negotiator is now free to see and evaluate several different options without becoming emotionally enmeshed in a specific position.

Fixing one's mind on the *goal* rather than a personal *position*, frees the person from selfish ambition or controlling behavior.

2. Understanding oriented – Whereas, the competitive negotiator is power oriented, the collaborative negotiator is understanding oriented. For success to be achieved with any collaborative effort, the parties must have an understanding of where the other party is coming from. For this to be achieved, a great negotiator must know how to listen and ask appropriate questions. The older sister might ask, "Why did you say that this might be Mom's last Christmas? What are you feeling?" or "What does making the best Christmas ever for Mom look like?" At the end of the day, both

sisters might lose sight of where the dinner is to be held and agree that the most important issue of all is about their mother.

3. People motivated – Most of us would agree that having people skills and being people motivated are vital to having a successful life. Clearly, that is true with collaborative negotiations. You can not have one without the other.

Have you ever been speaking to someone and within the first 15 seconds you realized they were not really that interested in you or what you had to say? What was your reaction? Did you trust them? Would you rather spend an hour with this type of person - self-motivated person or a person who genuinely cares about you?

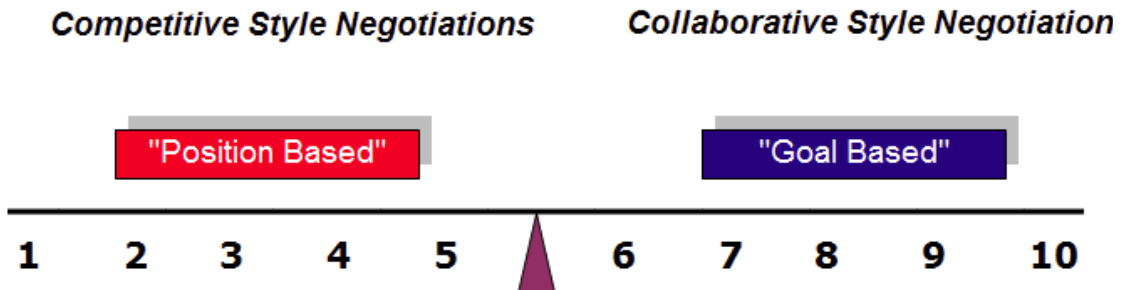
Because a great collaborative negotiator must be people motivated, possessing people skills is vital to their success.

4. Long-term interest – Whereas, the competitive negotiator has a short-term interest, the collaborative negotiator has a long-term interest in the relationship. Again, visit the couple discussing the proposed family vacation at the in-laws. If the husband can keep the long-term relationship in view, winning the battle may not be as important as developing a deep understanding of why his wife wants to spend the family vacation at her parent's house. He might ask, "Why is it that this seems so important to you this year?" As a collaborative negotiator, he has now become focused on the goal, not his personal position on the matter. At the end of the day, while keeping the long-term interest in view, the couple may compromise, stopping for two days at the in-laws on the way to another destination and stopping in for a couple of days on the way back home. The goal is achieved, the husband has a better understanding of his wife's needs and/or desires and the relationship has become stronger as a result.

Evaluate your primary negotiating style

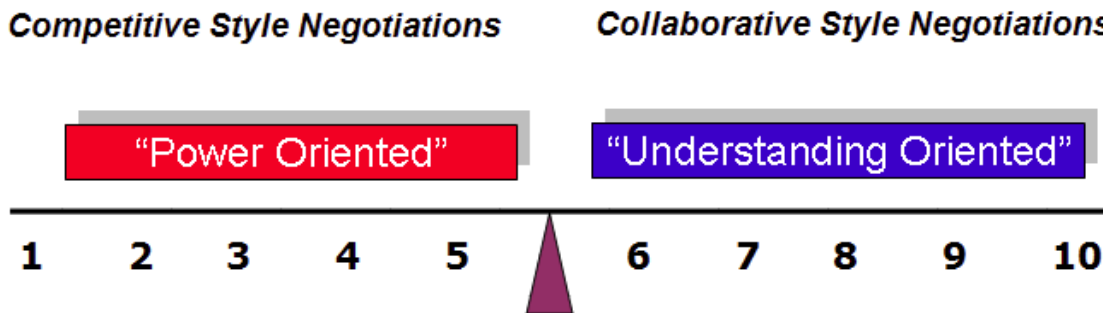
Position Based vs. Goal Based

When you enter any type of negotiation, whether at work, in your family or in a business venture, evaluate whether the negotiations were primarily "Position Based" or "Goal Based". Circle the number which best illustrates your primary negotiating tactic.



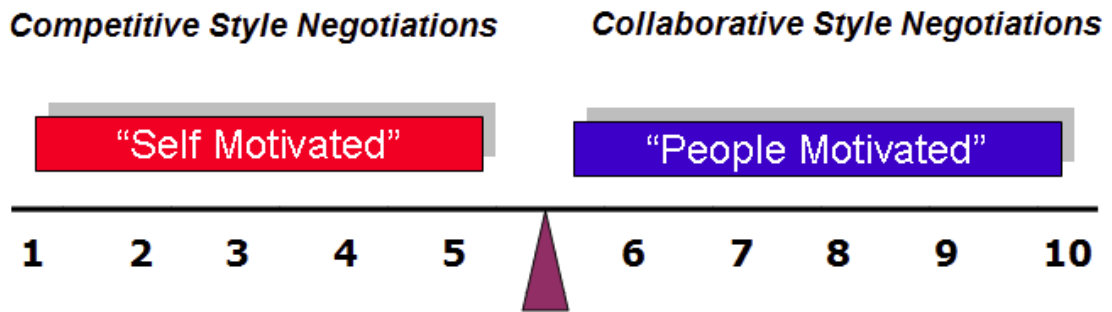
Power Oriented vs. Understanding Oriented

When you enter any type of negotiation, whether at work, in your family or in a business venture, evaluate whether the negotiations were primarily "Power Oriented" or "Understanding Oriented". Circle the number which best illustrates your primary negotiating tactic.



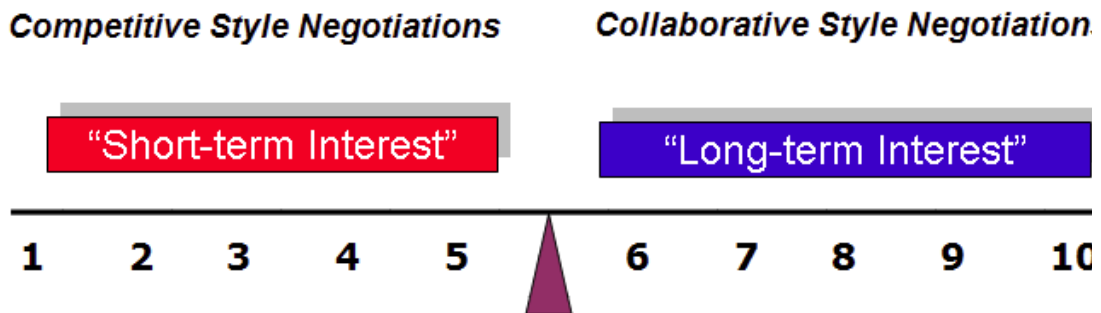
Self Motivated vs. People Motivated

When you enter any type of negotiation, whether at work, in your family or in a business venture, evaluate whether the negotiations were primarily "Self Motivated" or "People Motivated". Circle the number which best illustrates your primary negotiating tactic.



Short-term Interest vs. Long-term Interest

When you enter any type of negotiation, whether at work, in your family or in a business venture, evaluate whether the negotiations were primarily "Short-term Interest" or "Long-term Interest". Circle the number which best illustrates your primary negotiating tactic.



Scoring your negotiation style

Add up all four numbers and divide by four. Circle that number on the graph. This number indicates the predictable outcomes of your negotiations. Competitive = win/lose, lose/win or lose/lose. Collaborative – win/win.