

From: "Getting past no" William Ury  
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Summarised by Andrew Gibbons

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P 7 "To get past 'no' you need to understand what lies behind the 'no' "

P 8 "Five challenges:  
1. Don't react.  
2. Disarm your opponent.  
3. Change the game.  
4. Make it easy to say 'yes'.  
5. Make it hard to say 'no'.

P 9 "Breakthrough negotiation is the art of letting the other person have your way".

P 12 "Three common reactions when confronted with a difficult interpersonal situation:  
1. Strike back  
2. Give in.  
3. Break off.

P 15 "In reacting we lose sight of our interests".

P 16 "Much of your opponents' power lies in his ability to make you react".

P 17 "When you find yourself facing a difficult negotiation, you need to step back, collect your wits and see the situation objectively. Imagine you are negotiating on a stage, and then imagine yourself climbing onto a balcony overlooking the stage. The 'balcony' is a metaphor for a mental attitude of detachment. From the balcony you can more calmly evaluate the conflict, almost as if you were a third part. You can think constructively for both sides, and look for a mutually satisfactory way to resolve the situation".

"Going to the balcony means distancing yourself from your natural impulses and emotions".

P 18 "The prize in negotiation is *not* obtaining your position, but satisfying your interests".

"Behind your position lie your interests. Your interests are the intangible motivations that lead you to take that position: your needs, desires, concerns and fears".

P 19 "You usually can't satisfy your interests unless you also satisfy your opponents".

"While it may not be possible to obtain your position, it is often possible to satisfy your interests".

P 20 "Your BATNA is your best alternative to a negotiated agreement. It is your best way of satisfying your interests *without* the others' agreement".

"To identify your BATNA, you should consider three kinds of alternatives:

1. What can you do all by yourself to pursue your interests?  
- your walk away alternative.
2. What can you do directly to your opponent to make him respect your interests?  
- your interactive alternative.
3. How can you bring a third party into the situation to further your interests?  
- your third party alternative.

“A good BATNA usually does not exist, it needs to be developed. If your BATNA is not very strong you should take steps to improve it”.

P 21 “If you have a viable alternative and your opponent does not, then you have leverage in the negotiation. The better your BATNA (best alternative to negotiated agreement), the more power you have”.

“Once you know your interests, and have considered your BATNA, you should ask yourself whether you should negotiate at all. Perhaps your BATNA is better than any agreement you could reach with your opponent”.

“Remember too that the negotiation process itself is not free of costs. It can take a lot of time and effort, during the course of which your other alternatives may vanish. Your decision to negotiate should therefore be a carefully considered one”.

P 22 “There are dozens of tactics, but they can be grouped into three general categories, depending on whether they are obstructive, offensive, or defensive”.

“A *stone wall* is a refusal to budge – your opponent tries to convince you that he has no flexibility, and that there is no choice other than his position”.

P 23 “*Attacks* are pressure tactics designed to intimidate you and make you feel so uncomfortable that you ultimately give in to your opponents’ demands”.

“*Tricks* are tactics that dupe you into giving in. They take advantage of the fact that you assume your counterpart is acting in good faith and is telling the truth”.

P 25 “Whereas a liar can manipulate his words, he cannot easily control the anxiety that raises the pitch of his voice”.

P 26 “It’s very important that you know your ‘hot buttons’, - to properly neutralise the effect of your opponents’ tactic on you, you need to recognise not only what he is doing but also what you are feeling”.

“If you understand what your ‘hot buttons’ are, you can more easily recognise when your opponent is pushing them”.

P 27 “The simplest way to buy time in the middle of a tense negotiation is to pause and say nothing...your silence may make him feel a little uncomfortable. The onus of keeping the conversation going shifts back to him”.

- P 29 “You can pause only for so long. To buy more time to think, try rewinding the tape. Slow down the conversation by playing it back. Tell your counterpart: ‘let me make sure I understand what you are saying’. Review the conversation up to that point”.
- P 30 “If your opponent overloads you with information, hoping you will overlook a hidden drawback in his proposal, don’t hesitate to say ‘you’re giving too much information to digest so quickly – give me a little time to review this’. This works best when you get the other party to talk his way through it, giving you a chance to think (this is always easier when you’re not speaking) and to spot flaws or inconsistencies”.
- “Some people are afraid they will look stupid if they say I’m sorry I’m not following you’. Ironically, they are the ones most likely to be taken in, because they don’t ask the questions they ought to”.
- P 31 “An easy way to slow down the negotiation is to take careful notes. So say something like this – I’m sorry, I missed that’ and you’ll keep it at a place that suits you”.
- “If you need more time to think, you should take a break. Negotiations are more productive when they are broken up by frequent time outs”.
- P 32 “Never make an important decision on the spot – go to the balcony and make it there”.
- P 33 “Your worst enemy is your own quick reaction – only you can make the concession you will later regret”.
- “The first thing you need to do in dealing with a difficult person is not to control his behaviour, but to control your own”.
- P 36 “To disarm your opponent you need to do the opposite of what he expects”.
- P 39 “Effective negotiators listen more than they talk”.
- P 41 “By letting him tell his side of the story and acknowledge it, you create psychological room for him to accept that there may be another side to the story”.
- P 43 “We often overlook the simple power of an apology...what a person most often wants is the recognition that he has been wronged”.
- “Your apology need not be meek, nor an act of self-blame...even if your opponent is primarily responsible for the mess you are in, apologising for your share”.
- P 44 “Agree wherever you can. It is hard to attack someone who agrees with you”.
- P 45 “It is natural to focus on differences because differences cause the problem. At the outset however, you are usually better off focusing on common ground”.
- P 46 “Look for occasions when you can say ‘yes’ without making a concession. Each ‘yes’ you elicit from your opponent reduces tension”.
- P 47 “Connect with your counterpart by using the language he understands best”.
- P 48 “You need to distinguish between the person and his behaviour”.
- P 50 “The best time to lay the foundation for a good relationship is *before* a problem arises”.

“The secret lies in changing your mindset. The standard mindset is either/or. Either you are right or your opponent is. The alternative mindset is both/and – he can be right in terms of his experience, and you can be right in terms of yours”.

P 51 “Don’t say ‘but’ say ‘and’. Your opponent will be more receptive if you first acknowledge his views with a ‘yes’ and preface your own with an ‘and’ “.

“Whatever language you use, the key is to present your views as an addition to, rather than a direct contradiction of, your opponents’ point of view”.

“Make ‘I’ statements, not ‘you’ statements.

P 52 “The essence of an ‘I’ statement is to describe the impact of the problem on you. You are giving the other person information about the consequence of his behaviour in a form that is hard for him to reject – because it is *your* experience”.

P 54 “It is easier to listen to someone who has listened to you”.

P 60 “Instead of rejecting what your opponent says, accept, and transform it into the negotiation you want to have. In other words, reframe”.

P 61 “Reframing literally means changing the frame around the picture. In this case, it means putting a problem-solving frame around your opponents’ positional statements”.

P 62 “Because your opponent is concentrating on the outcome of the negotiation, he may not even be aware that you have subtly changed the process”.

P 63 “Instead of treating your opponents’ position as an obstacle, treat it as an opportunity. When he tells you his position, he is giving you valuable information about what he wants”.

“Invite him to tell you more (about his interests and wants) by asking ‘why is it that you want that?’, ‘what exactly is the problem?’ or ‘what are your concerns?’. When he answers, note what happens. The focus of conversation shifts from his position to his interests. You are suddenly engaged in problem-solving negotiation”.

“How you ask something is just as important as what you ask. If direct questions sound confrontational put them in an indirect form: ‘I’m not sure I understand why you want that’ for instance or ‘help me to see why that is important to you’ ”.

P 64 “If your opponent is reluctant to reveal his interests, take an indirect approach. If asking *why* doesn’t work, try asking *why not?* Propose an option and ask ‘why not do it this way?’ or ‘what would be wrong with this way?’ ”.

“People reluctant to disclose their concerns usually love to criticise”.

P 65 “If your opponent won’t reveal his interests, bring them up yourself, and ask him to correct your perceptions”.

P 66 “Another way to engage your opponent in a discussion of options is to ask for his advice. This is probably the last thing he expects”.

P 68 “As the French philosopher Blaise Pascal wrote more than three centuries ago: ‘people are more convinced by reasons they discovered for themselves than by those found by others’.

P 71 “Let silence and discomfort work on the mind”.

“If you observe the practice of successful negotiators, you will find that they ask countless questions”.

P 71 “To go around a stone wall you can:

1. Ignore it.
2. Reinterpret it.
3. Test it.

P 78 “To protect yourself, ask questions early on to clarify your opponents’ authority – ‘am I correct in assuming you have the authority to settle this matter?’ ”.

P 84 “Reframing means taking whatever your opponent says and directing it against the problem”.

P 93 “Negotiation is more about asking than it is about telling”.

“The simplest way to involve your opponent is to ask him for his ideas. How would he solve the problem of reconciling both sides’ interests”.

“Show your counterpart how your proposal stems from, or relates to his ideas”.

P 94 “As you develop your ideas, keep your opponent involved by inviting his criticism”.

P 95 “Often resistance stems from an unmet interest that you have overlooked”.

P 99 “The most common way to expand the pie is to make a low-cost, high-benefit trade. Identify items you could give your opponent that are of high benefit to him, but low cost to you. In return, seek items that are of high benefit to you, but low cost to him”.

P 100 “A negotiation does not take place in a social vacuum. There is always a constituency or audience whose opinions your opponent cares about. Their criticism typically boils down to two arguments: that he has backed down from his original position, and that the new proposal is unsatisfactory”.

P 107 “Pause at each step to sum up progress”.

P 108 “In the rush, it is also easy to conclude that you have reached agreement when in fact you have not”.

P 111 “The best general is the one who never fights”. Sun Tzu.

P 112 “An eye for an eye and we all go blind”. Mahatma Gandhi.

“The harder you make it for him to say no, the harder you make it for him to say yes. That is the power paradox”.

P 113 “The key mistake you make when you feel frustrated is to abandon the problem-solving game and turn to the power game instead”.

“Instead of using power to bring your opponent to his knees, use power to bring him to his senses”.

"If he refuses to come to terms despite all your efforts, it is usually because he believes he can win. He believes that his BATNA is superior to your 'golden bridge'. You need to convince him that he is wrong".

"Use your power to educate your opponent. Assume the mindset of a respectful counsellor. Act as if your opponent has simply miscalculated how best to achieve his interests".

P 114 "If your opponent does not understand the consequences of failing to reach agreement, you should begin by letting him know how serious they are".

P 115 "The three most common reality-testing questions are:

1. What do you think will happen if we don't agree?
2. What do you think I will do?
3. What will you do?

P 117 "Before proceeding with your BATNA, you should let your opponent know what you intend to do. You want to give him a chance to reconsider his refusal to negotiate".

"The key lies in framing what you say as a *warning* rather than a threat".

"A threat appears subjective and confrontational, while a warning appears objective and respectful".

"A threat is an announcement of your intention to inflict pain, injury, or punishment on your opponent. It is a negative promise. A warning comes across as what will happen if agreement is not reached".

P 118 "While a threat is confrontational in manner, a warning is delivered with respect".

P 122 "The more restraint you exercise, the less negative your opponents' reaction is likely to be".

P 125 "The presence of a third party can deter your opponent from threatening or attacking you".

P 126 "Sometimes just the knowledge that others are watching is enough to bring your opponent to the table".

P 128 "As you educate your opponent about the costs of no agreement, you need to remind him of the golden bridge you have built for him".

"Nothing will do more to reduce his resistance than the possibility of an attractive way out".

"Although you may assume your opponent knows of the way out, he may have become convinced that the way out no longer exists".

P 129 "It is easy for your opponent to misread your attempt to educate him through power as an attempt to defeat him. You need to reassure him constantly that your aim is mutual satisfaction not victory".

"Paradoxically, just when your opponent appears to be coming around, you are well advised to back off and let him make his own decision".

P 130 "An imposed outcome is an unstable one".

“Disraeli said: ‘Next to knowing when to seize and advantage, is knowing when to forgo an advantage’ “.

P 134 “It is in your interest for your opponent to feel as satisfied as possible at the conclusion of the negotiation”.

“Be generous at the very end. Resist the natural temptation to fight over the last crumb. As a professional hostage negotiator put it: ‘We save some flexibility for the end because we want them to win the last round’”.

P 135 “The best guarantee of a lasting agreement is a good working relationship”.

P 145 “The breakthrough strategy requires you to resist normal human temptations and do the opposite of what you usually feel like doing. It requires you to suspend your reaction when you feel like striking back; to listen when you feel like talking back; to ask questions when you feel like telling your opponent the answers; to bridge your differences when you feel like pushing for your way, and to educate when you feel like escalating”.

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