

# TACTICS

## **SILENCE IS GOLDEN**

When the other person is a talker and you want to learn as much as you can without making any type of commitment, saying nothing and letting the other person do the talking may be the best tactic. It is also good when someone says something angry, attacking or outrageous. If you do not say anything, there is nothing for the other person to counter.

### *Counter*

The most effective counter for Silence is the Open-ended Question, like “so what do you think about.....?” or “What areas are most important to you?”

## **HIGHER AUTHORITY**

The tactic of Higher Authority works for either person in a negotiation. Sometimes you cannot get a situation resolved by working with a particular person. Perhaps that person has decided not to comply with your request or they may not have the authority to do so. So, you go to a Higher Authority to obtain a satisfactory outcome. On the other hand, lacking a final say in a situation can create a very powerful position for the other person, since it provides him an opportunity to take your request to someone at a higher level in the organization.

### *Counter*

The best way to keep the tactic of Higher Authority from being used on you is to ask the other person in the very beginning whether this is where the final decision can be made. If not, try to do the negotiations with the decision maker.

## **FACTS AND STATISTICS**

Anytime you can incorporate Facts and Statistics into your negotiation, you have a tool that the other person will find difficult to handle. Good data can add a tremendous amount of power and credibility to your side. But be careful – if you quote statistics incorrectly and the other person proves you wrong, you lose credibility.

### *Counter*

First, you can question the validity of the person’s Facts and Statistics. Who participated in the Salary Survey? Who collected the information? Are those statistics valid for someone with X experience? A second option is to delay the negotiations to give time to do some comparable research.

## **STANDARD PRACTICE**

Standard Practice or Policy is a tactic used to convince the other person to proceed in a certain way simply because that way is “policy.” This tactic works well because it suggests that the way being proposed is the usual or customary procedure and therefore is the “safest.” Questioning just how “standard” a practice or policy is usually produces good results.

### ***Counter***

There are several options: use the Salami and slice away, ever so slightly, at what is considered “standard.” Or use the Trade-off Concession, agreeing to all in return for something you want. Finally, use “These Boots are Made for Walking” and go to someone else or go somewhere else.

## **TRADE-OFF CONCESSIONS**

Make it a rule to try to get something in return every time you give up something. Also, if you’re going to concede in the opening rounds of a negotiation, concede small (give up something you don’t care about or a small dollar amount).

### ***Counter***

If you can, get the other person to concede first. Exchange concessions for points that have less value to you, but mean something to the other person. Concede in small increments. Use the phrases: “I’ll think about that” or “let me think about it” or “no” if it’s not in your best interest. Do not concede without getting something in return.

## **DEFLECTING AN ANSWER WITH A GREAT QUESTION**

If you don’t have enough data to make an educated or correct response to the other person’s question right away, it may not be in your best interest to do so. In this case, it’s a good idea to use a question to deflect the answer. You might say, “How long would it take you to find out if we could do X?” You have not made a commitment, but you have asked a great question, which could yield important information.

### ***Counter***

If someone uses this tactic on you, the counter is to answer the question to the best of your ability and confirm that your answer is acceptable. Once you’ve done so, ask a closed-ended question to gain commitment. “If I agree to do X, would you be willing to do Y?”

### **I'LL THINK ABOUT IT AND GET BACK TO YOU LATER**

This is one of the best tactics to keep the door open in negotiations. If someone is asking you to do something or accept something that you're not immediately sure is the best thing for you, say, "That's a great question or that's interesting. I'll think about it and get back to you later."

#### ***Counter***

If this tactic is used, you might ask "What exactly are you going to think about?" and "When can we get back together to talk about this?" Another response is to indicate that you might talk with others in the interim.

### **PUT IT IN WRITING**

Whenever you and the other person reach agreement in a negotiation, you should be the one to put the agreement in writing. This gives you the opportunity to tie down any loose ends, such as times, dates or wording that favors your interests.

#### ***Counter***

If you don't agree with the 'loose ends' that someone else includes, you should immediately email or write the person, explaining how you think the issues should be handled. If he does not respond immediately, he will lose tremendous bargaining power when the two of you meet again to negotiate.

### **WE'VE NEVER DONE THAT BEFORE**

When you cite a precedent, you are using something in the past to justify a current request, position or concession. Reversing this tactic by saying, "There's no precedent for that" or "We've Never Done That Before" in reference to a negotiable point can be very effective.

#### ***Counter***

You can use examples from other universities or colleges. You can ask "how much would it cost to do that?" Or, you could ask to go to a Higher Authority to see if it could be done in this case.

### **THESE BOOTS WERE MADE FOR WALKING**

In any relationship, the side with the least commitment to continuing the relationship has the most power. If you can walk away from the negotiations when the tide turns against you have leverage.

#### ***Counter***

If you can meet your goals without that person, let them walk.

Adapted from *The Only Negotiating Guide You'll Ever Need*, by Stark and Flahterty