Any upwardly mobile career-minded individual needs to master the art of negotiations in professional life. Last week in Business Talk, we delved into different conflict negotiating positions and how to follow the Japanese model for negotiations to ensure more beneficial results.

Now, please utilise the below assessment adapted by authors Robert Lussier and Christopher Achua to take a deep look at your own negotiating abilities and shine a torch on your strengths and deficiencies.
Rate yourself a 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 on the following 16 statements with 1) meaning that the statement does not describe you at all, 2) describes you slightly, 3) describes you moderately, 4) describes you a reasonable amount, and 5) describes you a great deal.

First, please start by answering the following six questions about what you do before you start the actual negotiate on the 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 scale. If possible, you find out about the person you will negotiate with to determine what they want and will be willing to give up. You set objectives.

When planning your negotiating presentation, you focus on how the other party will benefit. You have a target price you want to pay, a lowest price you will pay, and an opening offer. You think through options and tradeoffs in case you don’t get your target price. You think of the questions and objections the other party might have, and you prepare answers.

Next, please answer the following 10 statements the actual negotiation on the 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 scale. At the beginning of negotiations, you develop rapport and read the person. You let the other party make the first offer. You listen to what the other parties are saying and focus on helping them get what they want, rather than focusing only on what you want. You do not give in too quickly to others’ offers.

When you compromise and give up something, you ask for something in return. If the other party tries to postpone the negotiation, you try to create urgency and tell them what they might lose.

If you want to postpone negotiation, you do not let the other party pressure you into making a decision. When you make a deal, you do not second-guess, wonder whether you got the best price, and check prices. If you cannot make an agreement, you ask for advice to help you with future negotiations. During the entire business negotiating process, you try to develop a relationship, not just a one-time deal.

Now, please total up your score for each of the 16 statements. Your combined total will range between 16 on the low side and 80 on the high side. If your total falls between 65 and 80, then congratulations!

You thrive as an outstanding negotiator and should consider leading specialised coaching, training, and negotiating in your career to capitalise on your ability. If your total lands between 50 and 65, you hold moderate negotiating skills and you need to improve on certain aspects where you rated yourself less than a 3 on individual statements. If your total falls below 50, then you desperately need to improve your negotiating abilities and should only negotiate for the time being with another member of your team who scores higher on your side.

If you scored yourself lower on any individual statement or groups of statements, then actively strive to incorporate that action into your negotiation behaviour. Next week, Business Talk will detail how women can strengthen their negotiating abilities to match or exceed the skills held by men.

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