

## Linda's Lessons

### **1. Prepare, prepare, prepare**

Solid preparation is key. Gather as much information as you can about your negotiation situation and your counterparty. Identify issues, prioritize interests and discuss best and worst case scenarios. Identify a list of questions to research. Know your BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement) and try to improve it.

### **2. Focus on interests not positions**

Build trust, share and assess priorities. Ask lots of questions about interests and listen carefully. Provide information, avoid unilateral concessions and ask for reciprocity. Once we are willing and able to share information strategically with the goal of understanding underlying interests, we can make mutually beneficial tradeoffs rather than splitting the difference. Use compromise as a last resort, not as a goal.

### **3. Look for trade-offs to create value**

Recognize that with many issues, joint gains are possible. Identify them. Differences are a good thing in negotiations. Avoid sequential bargaining and single-issue offers; Keep all issues on the table (i.e., package) for flexibility. When we find relative differences, we can trade on these differences. To find integrative outcomes, think like a trader --not a traitor!

### **4. Enlarge the pie before dividing**

While we have a bias toward competition, most negotiations in life are mixed motive: they involve both competition (value claiming) and cooperation (value creating). Think creatively about putting new issues on the table; add side issues that benefit both parties. First, be cooperative to create value, and then competitive to claim value. You don't want to end up with a big slice of a small pie.

### **5. Adapt your strategy to your counterparty's style**

Be aware that different problem solving modes are available to you: competition, collaboration, accommodation, cooperation, compromise and avoidance. Rather than relying on your default conflict resolution approach, practice being flexible and expand your repertoire. Remember to switch strategies when lacking progress.

### **6. Practice Conditional Cooperation**

Be nice (don't be the first to defect), be provokable (reciprocate defection), be forgiving (reciprocate cooperation), don't be envious (don't compare your success relative to other players) and be clear (don't be too clever). Remember that tactics for creating value, such as revealing information and clearly communicating interests can leave you vulnerable to value claiming behavior.