

Negotiate your success

Success for a small business (and especially those selling business to business) often hinges on striking good agreements and deals – with clients, customers, vendors, employees or others.



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So just what are the secrets to masterful deal-making? Here are negotiation essentials that apply to any size business or deal, from Arthur Wylie, author of “Only the Crazy and

Fearless Win BIG!”

■ **Know your own value.** While you can’t know everything the other party might want from you, be sure to understand what your offer or position can do for them. This means researching all the potential benefits and ways that your idea, product and/or service could help the other party, whether it is to solve a problem, boost profits or simply make their life or business more convenient and enjoyable.

■ **Pursue personal relations.** Don’t be afraid to show the other party who you are as an individual – what you can do, where your value is and how the deal at hand will benefit everyone. You learn about them; they learn about you.

Both parties must feel a synergy; only then can you forge a mutually beneficial relationship. When deals close quickly and easily it’s often because people have come to know and trust each other.

■ **Get buy-in on your vision.** Getting others on board with your plan can be challenging, especially when there are many people involved and/or there is much at stake. A critical step in artful deal-making is to articulate your vision of the outcome so the other side desires the very same outcome. Make the “what’s in it for me” factor crystal clear to the other party as you present your position.

■ **Be humble, fair and honest.** You have to be humble, but firm, to effectively broker a deal. There’s a fine line between the two, particularly when you’re dealing with people who’ve already achieved success. Always respect the positions of the other people involved in your negotiations, no matter how badly, or not, you want the deal.

■ **Show confidence.** It helps to add a dash of swagger as long as you are careful not to appear arrogant (remember humble from above). If finesse is about problem-solving and outside-the-box thinking, then swagger is about having a commanding and authoritative disposition and demeanor but without being pretentious or arrogant. It’s about knowing how good you are and hinting at what your business is capable of without bragging. In a deal-making situation, try to exude confidence, success and fearlessness. ■

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