

# BUSINESS STRATEGY 101

## How to Become a Master Negotiator: 7 KEYS

By Eldonna Lewis-Fernandez

While even the word “negotiation” can evoke fear, stress and anxiety for many, the intent is simple: to discuss and ultimately agree on a deal. Whether it’s a multi-million dollar contract or deciding where to meet for lunch, life is rife with negotiations. The negotiation process is much like a chess game where strategy reigns supreme; one thoughtfully considered move at a time. Make a careless, short-sighted, ill-conceived move and suffer the perilous consequences. Maximize your bargaining prowess in life and business with these 7 keys.

**When faced with the most daunting of deals, regard the act of negotiation as a "game"... it alleviates apprehension and gives you the confidence to make power plays that will facilitate your desired result. Unlike a strategy game such as chess, the most effective deals are a win-win proposition for all parties rather than a winner-loser result.**

### 1. Project Confidence Through Preparedness.

Some think to successfully negotiate they must show confidence by being loud and brazen. Others think a lot of experience is required. Most times tenacity and good preparation ensure you are equipped to assert mutually desirable terms, anticipate objections, and discern what motivators or hot buttons will resonate with your opponent. Projecting confidence means having heart; endearing to others whether or not you have years of negotiation experience. This can prompt the opposition to take a less defensive stance, making them more amenable to your stipulations. Projecting a notable level of confidence, and backing it up with solid, well-researched information, helps you prevail.

### 2. Understand That Everything Is Negotiable.

When you think like a negotiator, everything is negotiable! It is a mind set you need to become not a good negotiator, but a great one. When you decide

that the terms for anything can be changed in your favor, a world of opportunity opens. There are rules to adhere to with any deal, which are needed to evade chaos and keep discussions on track. However, even rules are negotiable and can be modified if you propose an ethical, viable and mutually beneficial alternative solution. Powerful negotiators are rule breakers!

### 3. Create Strong Foundations By Building Relationships First.

This is one of the most important negotiation tools in business and life. Do you attend networking events and give out dozens of business cards without having a conversation with anyone? Slow down. Make real connections with people, particularly those you could be involved in a deal with later on. Learn something about them and their lives. Information is gleaned during casual conversation (what they value, what motivates them, what annoys them, their ethics, etc.). Learn about them, not just their business. You can leverage what you learn through a genuine conversation with someone.

### 4. Ask For What You Want.

One truth in negotiation: ask for what you want. Sounds simple, but it can be daunting. People naturally fear rejection or are taught not to be “greedy” so instinctually refrain from asking for things. But in business, rejection is NOT personal; it’s a reflection that you didn’t present a viable argument for why you should get what you want. If you hear “no,” it’s the offer that is rejected, not you. Keep emotions in check. Re-calibrate your approach. “No” can reflect a need for more information. People say “no” an average of 3 times before they say “yes.” Understand that if you don’t ask... you don’t get. The way to master the art of rejection is to get rejected and keep asking. Ask for exactly what you want. Most times you will either get what you want or an acceptable alternative.

### 5. Use The Power Of Silence.

Talking too much is the best way to kill a deal. Has a

salesperson ever talked so much that he/she talked you out of a purchase? If they would have asked for the sale and stopped talking, their chance for success would have increased significantly. Never underestimate the power of silence. An old adage says, “he or she who speaks next loses.” When discussing a deal, stop talking and get comfortable with the awkwardness of silence. Your ability to win an argument, sell a product, or a get concession in a negotiation increases greatly.

### 6. Document Everything.

The importance of getting a final agreement in writing can’t be stressed enough. Better yet, consult a contracts attorney to review contractual documents or any that require a signature. The purpose of a written agreement or contract is to provide protection for both sides and alleviate any ambiguity of terms. A myriad of problems can occur when the terms of a deal are not put in writing because what you “think” the other party said and what they “think” you said can be two different things. Documenting an agreement eliminates “perception” problems, and protects the interests of all parties involved.

### 7. Understand Exactly What You Are Signing.

Before signing on the dotted line, read what you sign no matter how large of a packet it entails. Life is fast-paced and people engage in multiple things at once. This makes it difficult to focus and causes some to sign legal documents without first reading them. The result is disastrous. Read every agreement or contract in full, to ensure you are not confirming terms you will regret and cannot undo causing copious problems down the line.

Whether you are a seasoned negotiator or avoid it altogether, you can improve your results and be motivated to “get in the game” by using these negotiating keys. Gain advantage in your business and personal life, by thinking like a negotiator. It will greatly impact your ability to actualize your desired outcome.

[www.ThinkLikeANegotiator.com](http://www.ThinkLikeANegotiator.com).



### 12th Annual World Congress Society for Brain Mapping and Therapeutics (SBMT) Black Tie Gala Honors Professor Stephen Hawking.

The "Beacon of Courage and Dedication Award" went to Professor Stephen Hawking; writer/producer (Heroes, Homeland, USA Network's DIG) Tim Kring received the Golden Axon Award; Congresswoman Maxine Waters received the Pioneer in Health Care Policy Award. 1. Pantaleo Romanelli, M.D.; Shouleh Nikzad, Ph.D (past president SBMT, NASA/JPL physicist), Babak Kateb, M.D. (Brain Mapping Foundation-Neuroscientist), Professor Stephen Hawking; Evgeny Tsimerinov, M.D., Ph.D. (Award Committee Co-Chair).

2. Gala co-producer Harry Kloor (Jupiter 9 Productions) and Dr. Babak Kateb (Chairman of the Board, CEO and Scientific Director of Society for Brain Mapping

Photos: Craig Levine & Brain Mapping Foundation.