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Ask the Experts: Negotiating your franchise agreement

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By Eldonna Lewis Fernandez

Q: What kind of a negotiator does a prospective franchisee need to be when discussing the franchise agreement with the franchisor?

Eldonna says:

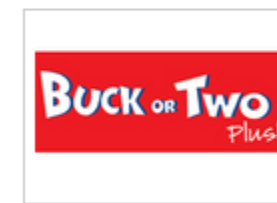
Anyone preparing to negotiate a franchise agreement—or any other contract—should first figure out his/her style of communication. Are you a direct communicator or more of a storyteller who likes to engage with all of the details? Maybe you don't like to negotiate and will take whatever deal is offered to you.

You must also identify who you are negotiating with and their style. Do they use bullying tactics or do they take a more co-operative approach?

Check with other franchisees about their experiences in dealing with the franchisor. If you can get specific details about concessions the franchisor made during their discussions, that will be a great help. At a minimum, you should find out about the exchanges and whether or not the franchisor was open to negotiation.

What finding out those details early on will help you save time and frustration during the negotiables,' for example, and then use them as concessions on your side of the

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