



Hellenic Open University
MSc in Supply Chain Management

Postgraduate Dissertation
Negotiation Strategies:
An overview of essential skills and approaches

Georgios Vlachos

Supervisor: Dr. Kalliopi Kravari

Patras, Greece, June 2024

Theses / Dissertations remain the intellectual property of students (“authors/creators”), but in the context of open access policy they grant to the HOU a non-exclusive license to use the right of reproduction, customization, public lending, presentation to an audience and digital dissemination thereof internationally, in electronic form and by any means for teaching and research purposes, for no fee and throughout the duration of intellectual property rights. Free access to the full text for studying and reading does not in any way mean that the author/creator shall allocate his/her intellectual property rights, nor shall he/she allow the reproduction, republication, copy, storage, sale, commercial use, transmission, distribution, publication, execution, downloading, uploading, translating, modifying in any way, of any part or summary of the dissertation, without the explicit prior written consent of the author/creator. Creators retain all their moral and property rights.



Negotiation Strategies: An overview of essential skills and approaches

Georgios Vlachos

Supervising Committee

Supervisor:
Kalliopi Kravari

Co-Supervisor:
Michail Geranios

Patras, Greece, June 2024

“To my family and loved ones”

Abstract

The current study was conducted in the field of negotiations and in particular the approaches, strategies, and skills that an individual must employ to accomplish its objectives. The dissertation highlighted essential steps in the preparation phase, important actions, ethical and cross-cultural considerations during the negotiation, as well as key elements and theoretical perspectives. The research also aimed to explore what is the behavior or what would be the behavior of an inexperienced person as opposed to an experienced person before and during the negotiation process. For the purpose of this study a Likert scale with five-point questions was applied to obtain views and experiences of 47 individuals. This research required a variety of viewpoints, from the most experienced negotiator to someone who has nothing to do with negotiations, so the questionnaire was distributed via social networks in a way to collect data from this wide range of people. The participants were separated into two groups: experienced, with more than four years of negotiating experience, and inexperienced, with less than four years of negotiation experience. The fields that individuals needed to be tested before the negotiation were information gathering, planning phase, setting goals and negotiation strategies. The important sectors that participants must be challenged during the negotiation are the opening stage, exploration stage and information exchange, approaches, policies and tactics during negotiation, cultural and ethical considerations, and post-negotiation. The research's central finding was that individuals are inclined to take certain negotiation strategies before and during a negotiation. Despite their negotiating experience, they had a consistent tendency to pick the same negotiating strategy, the integrative and focus on collaborative approaches. Finally, this study has concluded that the inexperienced and experienced participants were tested on important key factors that influence the negotiation outcome and presented common characteristics to many occasions.

Keywords

experience, strategies, information, planning

Περίληψη

Η παρούσα μελέτη διεξήχθη στον τομέα των διαπραγματεύσεων και ειδικότερα στις προσεγγίσεις, τις στρατηγικές και τις δεξιότητες που πρέπει να χρησιμοποιήσει ένα άτομο για να επιτύχει τους στόχους του. Η διατριβή ανέδειξε βασικά βήματα στη φάση της προετοιμασίας, σημαντικές ενέργειες, ηθικές και διαπολιτισμικές εκτιμήσεις κατά τη διάρκεια της διαπραγμάτευσης, καθώς και βασικά στοιχεία και θεωρητικές προοπτικές. Η έρευνα είχε επίσης ως στόχο να διερευνήσει ποια είναι η συμπεριφορά ή ποια θα ήταν η συμπεριφορά ενός άπειρου ατόμου σε αντίθεση με ένα έμπειρο άτομο πριν και κατά τη διάρκεια της διαδικασίας διαπραγμάτευσης. Για τους σκοπούς της παρούσας μελέτης εφαρμόστηκε μια κλίμακα Likert με ερωτήσεις πέντε σημείων για να ληφθούν οι απόψεις και οι εμπειρίες 47 ατόμων. Η παρούσα έρευνα απαιτούσε τη συμμετοχή μιας ευρείας γκάμας απόψεων, από τον πιο έμπειρο διαπραγματευτή έως κάποιον χωρίς καμία εμπειρία στις διαπραγματεύσεις, οπότε το ερωτηματολόγιο διανεμήθηκε μέσω κοινωνικών δικτύων με τρόπο ώστε να συλλεχθούν δεδομένα από αυτό το ευρύ φάσμα ατόμων. Οι συμμετέχοντες χωρίστηκαν σε δύο ομάδες: έμπειροι, με περισσότερα από τέσσερα χρόνια εμπειρίας σε διαπραγματεύσεις, και άπειροι, με λιγότερα από τέσσερα χρόνια εμπειρίας σε διαπραγματεύσεις. Τα πεδία που έπρεπε να εξεταστούν τα άτομα πριν από τη διαπραγμάτευση ήταν η συλλογή πληροφοριών, η φάση σχεδιασμού, ο καθορισμός στόχων και οι στρατηγικές διαπραγμάτευσης. Οι σημαντικοί τομείς που έπρεπε να δοκιμαστούν οι συμμετέχοντες κατά τη διάρκεια της διαπραγμάτευσης είναι το εναρκτήριο στάδιο, το στάδιο της διερεύνησης και της ανταλλαγής πληροφοριών, οι προσεγγίσεις, οι πολιτικές και οι τακτικές κατά τη διάρκεια της διαπραγμάτευσης, οι πολιτιστικές και ηθικές εκτιμήσεις και η μετά τη διαπραγμάτευση. Το συμπέρασμα της έρευνας ήταν ότι τα άτομα έχουν την τάση να λαμβάνουν ορισμένες στρατηγικές διαπραγμάτευσης πριν και κατά τη διάρκεια μιας διαπραγμάτευσης. Ανεξαρτήτως εμπειρίας, προτιμούσαν την ενοποιητική και συνεργατική προσέγγιση. Τέλος, η μελέτη διαπίστωσε ότι άπειροι και έμπειροι συμμετέχοντες παρουσίασαν κοινά χαρακτηριστικά σε βασικούς παράγοντες που επηρεάζουν το αποτέλεσμα της διαπραγμάτευσης.

Λέξεις – Κλειδιά

εμπειρία, στρατηγικές, πληροφορίες, σχεδιασμός

Table of Contents

Abstract	v
Περίληψη.....	vi
Table of Contents	vii
List of Figures	ix
List of Tables.....	xi
List of Abbreviations & Acronyms	xii
1. Introduction	1
2. Understanding Negotiation	2
2.1 Understanding Negotiation: Definitions and Concepts.....	2
2.2 Key Elements of Negotiation	3
2.2.1 Communication	3
2.2.2 Interest and Goals.....	3
2.2.3 Trust and Relationship Building	4
2.2.4 Alternatives and BATNA.....	4
2.2.5 Creativity and Problem-Solving.....	4
2.2.6 Culture and Context	5
2.2.7 Emotional Intelligence	5
2.3 Theoretical Perspectives on Negotiation.....	5
2.3.1 Game Theory.....	5
2.3.2 Social Exchange Theory	7
2.3.3 Cognitive psychology.....	7
3. Essential Steps for Successful Negotiation: Preparation and Action Before and During the Process.....	9
3.1 The Integral Preparation Phase in Negotiation: A Comprehensive Guide	9
3.1.1 Setting Objectives and Goals	9
3.1.2 Research and Information Gathering	9
3.1.3 Establishing Priorities and Trade-offs.....	9
3.1.4 Assessing Stakeholders and Their Interests	10
3.1.5 Setting Limits and Goals	10
3.1.6 Calculating the Cost of Concessions.....	10
3.2 Strategic Planning in Negotiation: Maximizing Success	11
3.2.1 Strategy Formulation.....	11
3.2.2 Risk Assessment.....	12
3.2.3 Resource Allocation	12
3.2.4 Communication Plan	13
3.2.5 Contingency Planning	13
3.2.6 Stakeholder Engagement.....	13
3.3 Navigating the Negotiation Process: A Comprehensive Exploration	13
3.3.1 Opening Moves and Setting the Tone	14
3.3.2 Preparation and Information Exchange.....	14
3.3.3 Opening	14
3.3.4 Exploration.....	15
3.3.5 Bargaining	15

3.3.6 Exchange and Deal Closing	15
3.3.7 Implementation	16
3.3.8 Review and Evaluation	16
4. Ethical Considerations and Cross-Cultural Dynamics in Negotiation	17
4.1 Ethical Considerations in Negotiation	17
4.2 Cross-Cultural Negotiation	18
5. Methodology	20
5.1 Research Methodology.....	20
5.2.1 Choosing a Method	21
5.2.2 Conducting the Survey	22
5.2.3 Questionnaire	23
5.2.4 Likert Scale	24
5.3 Analysis.....	25
6. Results	26
6.1 General Information	26
6.1.1 Demographics	26
6.1.2 Experience	27
6.2 Before the Negotiation	30
6.2.1 Information Gathering.....	30
6.2.2 Planning Phase	32
6.2.4 Negotiation Strategies	41
6.3 During the Negotiation.....	45
6.3.1 Opening Stage	45
6.3.2 Exploration Stage and Information Exchange	48
6.3.3 Approaches, Policies and Tactics during the Negotiation	53
6.3.4 Cultural and Ethical Considerations.....	61
6.3.5 Post Negotiation	63
7. Conclusion.....	65
References	67
Appendix A: Questionnaire.....	73

List of Figures

Figure 1. The Prisoner's Dilemma (Holodny, 2018)	6
Figure 2. Negotiation Styles/Strategies (Sidney, S., 2019	12
Figure 3. Gender of the participants who participated in the survey.	27
Figure 4. Employment status.....	28
Figure 5. Time of experience in negotiations.....	29
Figure 6. Information gathering in the preparatory phase of negotiation.	31
Figure 7. Knowledge of the other party's needs and understanding of their point of view.	32
Figure 8. Negotiation preparation and right planning	33
Figure 9. Viewpoint about communication plan.....	34
Figure 10. Effective team planning.....	35
Figure 11. Interests in negotiations.	35
Figure 12. Potential risks in the negotiation.....	36
Figure 13. Cost of concessions.....	37
Figure 14. Objectives and goals.	38
Figure 15. Objectives prioritization and trade-offs evaluation.	39
Figure 16. Objectives prioritization and trade-offs evaluation.	40
Figure 17. S.M.A.R.T. goals.	41
Figure 18. Negotiation strategies tailored to the specific context and goals.....	42
Figure 19. Is it right to keep one strategy during the negotiation process?	43
Figure 20. A negotiation strategy that allows both parties to achieve their objectives.....	44
Figure 21. Negotiation strategy that focuses on winning against the others.....	45
Figure 22. BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement).....	46
Figure 23. Positive atmosphere through negotiation.....	47
Figure 24. Upper hand or positive environment?.....	48
Figure 25. Requirements during the negotiation process.....	49
Figure 26. Active listening & empathy.	50
Figure 27. Transparency during negotiations.....	51
Figure 28. Information exchange.	52
Figure 29. Delving deeper into issues.	53
Figure 30. Building trust and relationships.	54
Figure 31. Managing emotions during negotiations.	55
Figure 32. Ours and our counterparts' interests.....	56
Figure 33. When a deadlock arises.	57
Figure 34. "Flexibility in problem-solving strategies is crucial for successful negotiation outcomes".....	58
Figure 35. Checking the understanding.	59
Figure 36. Concessions during negotiation.	60
Figure 37. Negotiation tactics.	60
Figure 38. Cultural and contextual differences.	61

Figure 39. Cultural intelligence (CQ).	62
Figure 40. Ethical considerations.	63
Figure 41. Satisfaction with the terms of the deal.	64
Figure 42. Agreement terms: Are they implemented?	64

List of Tables

Table 1. Age of Participants.....	27
Table 2. Participants’ professional field.....	29
Table 3. Number of Participants with more than 4 years of negotiation experience based on their professional field.....	30

List of Abbreviations & Acronyms

BATNA	Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement
CQ	Cultural Intelligence

1. Introduction

In both personal and professional contexts, negotiation is a critical skill, which includes scenarios such as business dealings, diplomatic exchanges, and day-to-day interactions. This dissertation with the title “Negotiation Strategies: An Overview of Essential Skills and Approaches” seeks to investigate the various aspects that surround negotiation by examining strategies, approaches, and skills that are important for positive results in negotiations.

At its core, negotiation is a dynamic process of communication between parties with differing interests, preferences, or goals to reach a mutually agreeable settlement. This research emphasizes preparedness, effective communication, and strategic thinking during negotiations conducted. It investigates theoretical perspectives as well as practical applications for a comprehensive knowledge of how negotiations can be effectively managed for desired results.

The main aim of this research is to investigate the primary factors and theoretical perspectives that underpin effective negotiation. Its research sets out to understand the process of negotiation by examining key stages in the preparation, important actions during negotiation, as well as ethical and cross-cultural considerations. Moreover, it aims at comparing inexperienced negotiators’ behavior and strategies with those used by experienced ones to establish how experience affects negotiation results.

Empirical analysis of data collected from 47 people who had different levels of experience in negotiations is a critical part of this study. In this case, the research employs a Likert scale with five-point questions to collect ideas from respondents about their opinions and experiences that fall into two groups; those who have negotiated for more than four years and those who have been doing it for less than four years. This makes sure there are different perspectives which will help enrich the analysis and findings.

In essence, the dissertation intends to provide readers with a comprehensive grasp of how negotiations work practically alongside theoretical knowledge that would improve negotiators’ skills. The study bridges theory and practice thereby providing invaluable advice not only to beginners but also to experienced negotiators toward more effective outcomes achieved in negotiations.

2. Understanding Negotiation

2.1 Understanding Negotiation: Definitions and Concepts

Negotiation is a complicated and important part of human communication in business, diplomacy, politics, or personal relationships. This is why negotiation seems simple but has many definitions and principles that help us understand it better in terms of what it is all about.

Essentially, negotiation is a conversation between multiple entities with different interests, preferences, or goals. The main objective of this interaction is to obtain an agreement acceptable to all participants or to successfully resolve a conflict. (Lewicki, Barry, & Saunders, 2016). This concept highlights the dual purpose of negotiation, which is to manage conflict while also encouraging collaboration. Furthermore, it underlines that negotiation is a strategic communication process in which the parties engaged interact to achieve their objectives.

Besides, negotiation is not only applicable in structured settings where there are explicit objectives and known processes; it occurs informally in everyday interactions when people attempt to influence or convince others to suit their needs or desires. Whether it is requesting a pay raise, resolving conflicts in a team, or haggling with suppliers, the skill of negotiation is beneficial because personal and professional success are improved (Shell, 2006).

Understanding power dynamics in bargaining is also vital throughout the negotiating process. Power can take many forms including information, resources or even control over whether someone walks away from the table (Lax & Sebenius, 2006). Understanding and addressing imbalances of power is essential for fairness and sustainability since one party may manipulate or push another, jeopardizing integrity.

A key element of understanding negotiations is differentiating between positions and interests (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 2011). A position represents what somebody wants while an interest represents why they want it. Distinguishing these two aspects helps individuals recognize that there are typically more places where agreement may be found than originally appears, by finding mutually beneficial solutions and expanding the pie, based on underlying concerns rather than arguing about specific desires.

Finally, negotiation involves using various methods and tactics to influence others' behaviors to achieve desired outcomes in a deal (Thompson, 2005). Tactics range from very confrontational, such as issuing threats or offering ultimatums, to passive methods, such as silence.

2.2 Key Elements of Negotiation

Understanding what others want (interests), defining goals, communicating, and being open to adjusting (adaptability) are the foundations of negotiation. Successful negotiators are able to identify their own needs as well as those of the other party, which may be accomplished through active listening and the use of persuasive tactics. In addition, they also need to create positive results by applying creative problem-solving methods while maintaining a focus on collaboration. Good preparation is necessary for any negotiation process. Still, flexibility should not be underestimated because there must be room for power maneuvers until all parties concerned achieve a win-win scenario. This part takes a closer look at the key elements required to have a successful negotiation.

2.2.1 Communication

Communication is key to negotiation. It allows people to share information, interests, and suggestions (Thompson, 2005). Good communication is not limited to speaking alone; it also includes active listening skills, empathy for others' feelings and an awareness of nonverbal signs (Lewicki & Hiam, 2008). When parties are transparent in their conversations, they establish trust, which leads to collaborative problem-solving. (Lewicki & Hiam, 2008). It can also assist avoid misunderstandings or even manage expectations while fostering a collaborative environment in which all parties feel free to express their preferences.

2.2.2 Interest and Goals

Central to negotiation are the underlying interests and goals of each party. Interests reflect the core needs, concerns, and aspirations guiding their actions, while goals indicate the specific outcomes they aim to achieve in negotiation (Fisher et al., 1991). Distinguishing between positions (demands) and interests (motivations) is crucial for finding common ground, exploring innovative solutions, and reaching mutually beneficial agreements. Understanding parties' underlying interests fosters empathy and enhances the likelihood of

crafting mutually beneficial solutions, leading to more sustainable and satisfying negotiation outcomes (Fisher et al., 1991).

2.2.3 Trust and Relationship Building

For negotiations to be fruitful, it is necessary to establish trust and build relationships that encourage cooperation, credibility, and lasting partnerships (Lewicki & Wiethoff, 2000). Trust aids communication by creating an environment free from doubt where people can work together towards common goals through sharing ideas and making compromises (Lewicki & Wiethoff, 2000). This involves honesty with each other, keeping commitments made, and demonstrating dedication to obtaining mutual benefits, which necessitates open communication channels among the parties participating in the negotiating process (Lewicki & Wiethoff, 2000).

2.2.4 Alternatives and BATNA

Alternatives evaluation is a key part of negotiation strategy which involves assessing different possible choices against one's Best Alternative to A Negotiated Agreement (BATNA). This refers to what an individual or group can do if they fail to get what they want from the current negotiations (Fisher et al., 1991). By understanding their BATNA parties can evaluate various agreements objectively, set achievable goals for themselves, and know how far they should push during bargaining so as not to weaken their position further than necessary. Reservation points denote minimum acceptable outcomes below which nobody wants anything further to do with negotiations because it represents either the bottom line or the least favorable result that any party would accept before discontinuing such talks altogether (Thompson, 2005). The establishment of these limits helps negotiators define ranges within which proposed settlements may be considered appropriate at every stage along the way until the agreement is reached (Thompson, 2005).

2.2.5 Creativity and Problem-Solving

To overcome impasses arising out of conflicting positions, creativity and problem-solving skills are necessary when dealing with deadlocks during negotiation process (Lax & Sebenius, 1986). These occur where two or more parties are unable to reach an agreement due to differences over certain issues like values, communication problems among others; thus, preventing them from moving towards finding a mutually acceptable solution. Creativity enables individuals to adapt themselves according to new situations that come up while negotiating whereas flexible approaches enable them to change tactics whenever

necessary in order move closer towards resolving disputes amicably (Shell, 2006). Such tactics require the ability think outside box, consider different perspectives and synthesize varied interests which can lead to conclusions that satisfy all parties engaged in the negotiating process (Lax & Sebenius, 1986).

2.2.6 Culture and Context

Cultural and contextual factors significantly determine the dynamics and strategies of negotiations. Cultural norms, values and communication styles affect how parties perceive and engage in negotiations (Gelfand, Brett & Gunia, 2011). Therefore, it is important to understand cultural subtleties and adjust negotiation methods appropriately to build relationships, reduce misunderstandings and encourage cooperation among people from diverse cultures (Gelfand, Brett & Gunia, 2011). This recognition enhances negotiators' adaptability in different environments.

2.2.7 Emotional Intelligence

The role of emotional intelligence cannot be overlooked when it comes to effective negotiation skills since this enables one to regulate their emotions properly, demonstrate empathy for other people's feelings as well as influencing positive interpersonal relationship management (Goleman, 1995). Emotional intelligence refers to being self-aware, self-controlled, or having social skills that are good enough for understanding others, therefore leading to improved communication that supports trust building while supporting cooperation to create win-win solutions collaboratively (Goleman, 1995). Realizing these aspects increases individuals' abilities in dealing with different personalities during negotiation processes for mutual gain.

2.3 Theoretical Perspectives on Negotiation

Negotiation is a complicated social event that has been explained using different theories that seek to describe what it consists of, how it works, and the consequences. These views provide a basis for understanding the negotiation process dynamics and offer insights into factors that affect negotiation success. This part will explore some well-known negotiation theories, including game theory, social exchange theory, and cognitive psychology.

2.3.1 Game Theory

Game theory is a multi-disciplinary field that applies mathematical models to analyze strategic interactions among rational decision-makers (Axelrod, 1984). In negotiation, game

theory provides a useful framework for understanding how parties make strategic choices during negotiation. Through studying such strategic interactions, negotiators can learn how to maximize their own outcomes considering other parties’ moves and possible responses.

The prisoner’s dilemma (Lewicki, Saunders & Minton, 1999) is one of the most famous ideas in game theory often used in negotiations. In this classic scenario, two players have the option of cooperating or defecting from one another. The consequences depend on what both sides choose; if they both cooperate then it is beneficial to all of them but when one cooperates while another chooses “betrayal” as he gets better off at the expense of the other person who ends up worse off than before. If each “betrays” another person then both will suffer more than if any had chosen to remain silent about everything. The prisoners' dilemma illustrates the tension between personal selfishness and common collaboration which arises in many negotiation contexts.

THE PRISONER'S DILEMMA

	B stays silent (cooperates)	B betrays A (defects)
A stays silent (cooperates)	Both serve 1 year	A serves 3 years, B goes free
A betrays B (defects)	A goes free, B serves 3 years	Both serve 2 years

SOURCE: Wikipedia

BUSINESS INSIDER

Figure 1. The Prisoner’s Dilemma (Holodny, 2018)

Furthermore, game theory is also an opportunity to get to know fundamental concepts such as Nash equilibrium and Pareto efficiency which can help us understand negotiation dynamics better (Kreps, 1990). Every player has their own best strategy given what they think others will do. In other words, under Nash equilibrium, no player has an incentive to change strategy alone. This serves as a useful idea for finding stable results in negotiations where each side acts strategically on its beliefs about the other’s moves.

Pareto efficiency is another concept derived from game theory. It implies that there is no way for one party to gain without causing losses to another participant in the negotiation process. To put it simply: if we want everyone to be happy then nobody should be able to make any more improvements without making somebody else worse off first. Negotiators strive towards achieving partiality so that negotiated outcomes are mutually beneficial as possible.

2.3.2 Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory, which was initially developed by Homans in 1958 and then reconstructed by Thibaut and Kelley in 1959, emphasizes the importance of reciprocity and interdependence in social interactions. This theory helps to understand negotiations as a dynamic process between two or more parties. According to this viewpoint, people negotiate to get maximum benefits with minimum cost while they expect equitable treatment from their negotiation partners. Therefore, negotiation is seen as an enterprise where concessions have to be made so that all involved can gain something.

Social exchange theory highlights trustworthiness, fairness, and relationship quality (Blau, 1964). Trust creates an environment for cooperation by reducing uncertainty through transparency in sharing information during negotiations (Lewicki, Saunders & Minton, 1999). Parties will only accept fairness on their side if they feel it is also fair; otherwise, no compromise may occur, even if all required sacrifices are made.

Also, social exchange theory points out that normative beliefs about how others should behave affect individual behavior during negotiation (Molm, Takahashi & Peterson, 2000). This is because people try to protect their reputation within society, hence they act based on what they think others expect from them. Certain negotiators may adhere to standards such as reciprocity or fairness norms just to avoid damaging their own reputations among coworkers.

2.3.3 Cognitive psychology

Cognitive psychology provides useful insights into negotiation dynamics (Baron, 1994). The discipline investigates how people see things, think about them, and make sense of them in relation to negotiations they engage in.

One thing cognitive psychology has done for negotiation theory is to look at the mental shortcuts or rules of thumb that affect judgement under uncertainty (Tversky & Kahneman,

1974). For example, negotiators tend to be influenced by what they were originally informed or what they came with as a benchmark point; this distorts subsequent evaluations as well as their concession-making behavior. (Northcraft & Neale, 1987).

Furthermore, it emphasizes the thinking processes that occur when information is managed and issues are solved during bargaining (Bazerman, 1983). People use mental frameworks or models through which they interpret facts, evaluate options, and work out answers to difficult puzzles in negotiations involving complex issues (Neale & Bazerman, 1991). Knowing about these cognitive activities can help negotiators present arguments better; also frame matters differently to create more value than would otherwise be possible.

Finally, this branch underscores the need for flexibility of thought combined with creative thinking skills in adapting one's approach to changing conditions surrounding the negotiation process itself (De Dreu & van de Vliert, 1997). When faced with new data negotiators who exhibit such adaptability can easily adjust their methods depending on altered priorities or shifting relationships thereby increasing chances of reaching satisfactory outcomes.

3. Essential Steps for Successful Negotiation: Preparation and Action Before and During the Process

3.1 The Integral Preparation Phase in Negotiation: A Comprehensive Guide

In order to achieve the best results possible, negotiation must be approached as a complex process that requires careful preparation. Preparations lay the groundwork for successful negotiations. This phase involves setting targets and aims, doing studies and collecting data, ranking priorities, and making sacrifices, appraising stakeholder groups with their interests at heart, fixing boundaries within which one can operate comfortably among others. Each of these steps will be analyzed to ensure that everyone understands what they entail and how effectively to handle them in practice.

3.1.1 Setting Objectives and Goals

At the start of a negotiation, it is extremely important to set precise goals and objectives. Objectives are meant to explain what negotiators want to accomplish while goals indicate specific outcomes that they would like to achieve. These must be SMART i.e. Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time bound (Rubin, 2002). Conversely, goals denote tangible results which should be attained by parties involved in the bargaining process. Through setting their aims out clearly in terms of targets or purposes negotiators enable themselves with decision making frameworks that will give them desired outputs (Thompson, 2005).

3.1.2 Research and Information Gathering

The preparatory stage requires a comprehensive investigation and gathering of data. These include collecting necessary information and understanding about the negotiation environment like market trends, industry standards, legal obligations as well as other party's interests and preferences. With this deep knowledge about the topic at hand, negotiators can identify where they might agree or disagree and predict what another person may think about it from their own point of view thus enabling them to come up with informed strategies (Lewicki, Saunders & Barry, 2016).

3.1.3 Establishing Priorities and Trade-offs

Prioritizing objectives and evaluating potential trade-offs are imperative tasks for negotiators during the preparatory phase. To prioritize means to identify those issues or

objectives which are most important in relation to broader aims of negotiation. Trade-offs, on the other hand, require negotiators to judge how much different concessions matter relatively and select which among them they can afford to make in order to achieve their ends. Through this process, negotiators become able both to concentrate on what is essential while skillfully handling giveaways to obtain best results (Fisher et al., 2011).

3.1.4 Assessing Stakeholders and Their Interests

Negotiation is more than just the main parties involved; it also includes various stakeholders who might be influenced by or can influence the negotiation outcomes. Evaluating stakeholders requires understanding their interests, worries and possible areas of agreement or conflict. This involves those within negotiating entities and external ones like customers, suppliers, regulators, and the community at large. Through appreciating each stakeholder's interest and perspective, negotiators can predict reactions, build alliances, and generate solutions that meet all relevant party's needs (Lax & Sebenius 2006).

3.1.5 Setting Limits and Goals

Setting boundaries for negotiation results requires defining limits and goals. Limits are the lines negotiators won't cross, they save important interests and prevent them from making too many obligations. Goals show what parties want to achieve through talks. However, they should be difficult but realistic enough in order not only to motivate people but also to make them ready for changes if necessary. When precise bounds and objectives are set by the participants it provides a way of measuring advancement and evaluating possible deals (Cohen, 2014).

3.1.6 Calculating the Cost of Concessions

Categorizing how much is being given up during a negotiation is important for good decision making. This task involves assessing the value and repercussions of compromises reached in the course of bargaining. Among other things, strategic worthiness in terms of resources distribution alongside long-term impacts are key determinants. Quantitative assessments can be used to calculate costs using different methods such as scenario analysis or benchmarking against industry standards which may also involve seeking expert opinions where necessary (Thompson, 2005). Understanding what concessions actually cost helps negotiators improve their strategies, create more value and arrive at win-win deals.

3.2 Strategic Planning in Negotiation: Maximizing Success

Negotiation planning is a key point in the process where one establishes strategies, assesses uncertainties, allocates resources, sets up communication approaches, creates backup plans and formulates methods of involving stakeholders. All parts of this phase serve to make negotiations successful by increasing their effectiveness and efficiency which in turn determines whether positive outcomes will be achieved or not. Thus, with this detailed examination there will be a closer look at what makes these preparations so fundamental for negotiators' success.

3.2.1 Strategy Formulation

Effective negotiation strategizing requires strategy development. This process involves determining the overall strategy and approaches to use throughout the negotiation. These can vary depending on factors such as the type of negotiation (e.g., distributive or integrative), parties' goals, and context dynamics among others. For instance, negotiators may opt for a cooperative strategy aimed at increasing joint gains or a competitive strategy designed to secure favorable terms for their own side (Fisher et al., 2011). Strategy development sets the tone of bargaining interactions and guides decision-making during negotiations.

Negotiators often categorize negotiation methods as distributive versus integrative tactics (Pruitt & Rubin, 1986). Distributive negotiation tactics – also known as win-lose negotiating – focuses around competing over how resources are divided. This means that when one party gains something, another loses an equal amount. Conversely, in integrative negotiation tactics (win-win negotiating) parties seek to enlarge the resource pie through collaboration and creative problem solving so that all sides can meet their needs without excessive concessions.

Before starting negotiations, a negotiator must choose which approach best suits his/her situation taking into consideration such factors as context, objectives and dynamics with the other party involved. In situations where trust is low it might be more appropriate to adopt a distributive approach whereas an integrative one would work better if there were potential for joint gain through cooperation over long-term relationship building (Pruitt & Rubin, 1986). Eventually, whether to adopt distributive or integrative tactics is determined by how

the negotiator interprets the context in which he/she functions in relation to the intended goals of the negotiating process.

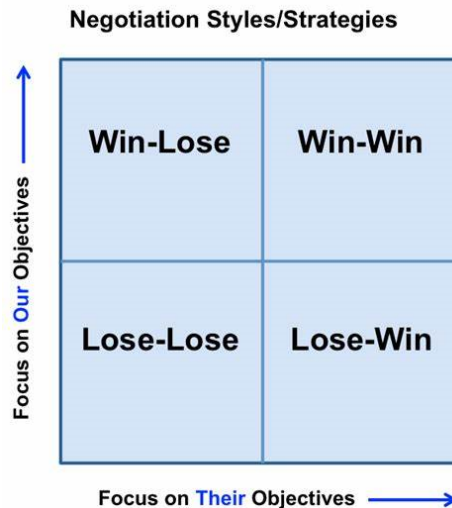


Figure 2. Negotiation Styles/Strategies (Sidney, S., 2019)

3.2.2 Risk Assessment

To identify dangers and problems that could affect negotiation results, a wide-ranging risk appraisal must be carried out. There are many sources of risk, including those arising from ambiguousness in the negotiation setting, differences in party objectives, and external factors such as market forces or changes in regulations. Negotiators can anticipate likely barriers, evaluate their likely impacts and plan how to overcome them through careful assessment of risks (Lewicki, Saunders & Barry, 2016). This approach helps to make negotiation efforts more robust against disruptions while lowering them down.

3.2.3 Resource Allocation

The distribution of assets is referred to as resource allocation, including time, money and staff members for the improvement of negotiations. Proper distribution guarantees that negotiators have what they need in order to implement their plans successfully while efficient utilization may require such things as setting aside funds for research or designating personnel with specific skills to join negotiation teams among other milestones (Cohen, 2014). Negotiators can enhance effectiveness through putting resources into better use which will also help them reduce risk levels besides achieving maximum results.

3.2.4 Communication Plan

A communication plan that is clearly outlined is essential to enable effective communication between negotiators. Such plans indicate the channels, procedures and rules that should be followed when passing information or messages and coordinating dialogue within the entire negotiation process. This involves stating how often and in what manner they will communicate, creating guidelines for participation as well as assigning communication-related duties (Thompson, 2005). Being transparent and consistent in conveying ideas build trust among people involved in negotiations while reducing misinterpretations which in turn foster joint problem-solving leading up to favorable results of a negotiation.

3.2.5 Contingency Planning

The idea behind contingency planning is to be ready for the unexpected or any other thing that may disrupt the process of negotiation. This includes identification of threats, coming up with substitute tactics and implementing feedback mechanisms to manage unexpected situations. People who utilize them can always debate topics that involve obstacles, cope with changes while remaining focused on the goals of negotiations (Lax & Sebenius, 2017). When negotiators realize the importance of contingency planning in their strategy, they become more accommodating and flexible, which boosts their chances of success.

3.2.6 Stakeholder Engagement

In order to consider all relevant parties' concerns and needs during talks it is important to involve as many stakeholders as possible. This includes those inside the negotiating organization such as staff or board members, and outside groups like customers, suppliers, regulators or communities affected by decisions made there. Successful stakeholder engagement requires first to identify who they are, secondly to understand what motivates them the most (their interests) and thirdly to absorb these perspectives into strategies for bargaining (Lax & Sebenius 2006). Getting individuals involved early on and with a positive attitude might assist in building agreement later when things grow difficult, but also appease those likely to resist any outcome otherwise reached. Finally, selecting a suitable negotiation team will surely improve the outcomes.

3.3 Navigating the Negotiation Process: A Comprehensive Exploration

Negotiations usually go through different steps with their own peculiarities, difficulties, and approaches. This knowledge is vital for successful navigation of negotiations as well as

getting positive results. In this part, there will be an examination of key negotiation stages to clarify why they are significant and provide suggestions for effective strategies for bargaining.

3.3.1 Opening Moves and Setting the Tone

The initial events that occur when a negotiation begins are very important because they set the stage for everything else and create an atmosphere. Usually, these early conversations concentrate on building a relationship, establishing trust, and mapping out what will be discussed during the negotiation process. Opening moves can involve greetings, introductions, and casual conversation to foster good feelings and establish rapport between the parties involved. Additionally, negotiators might choose to reveal their aspirations or fears around this bargaining session to make it more positive while also provoking fruitful dialogue (Lax & Sebenius, 2006).

3.3.2 Preparation and Information Exchange

Comprehensive preparation often makes or breaks a negotiation's success. This encompasses research the other party, comprehending their needs, wants and limitations as well as clarifying one's own objectives and defining what one aims to achieve with that negotiation (Lewicki, Saunders & Barry, 2016). Good information sharing involves active listening, asking thoughtful questions and openly providing relevant information. Adequate preparedness enables negotiators to anticipate potential problems, develop strategies for the solutions that could be found and take a position during the negotiation process. Moreover, when we share information, it helps us build trust which leads to cooperation hence positive negotiations outcomes (Thompson, 2005).

3.3.3 Opening

The very first stage is called the beginning. Participants in negotiation at this point set the atmosphere for communication, cultivate relationships, and represent their initial positions. It is important to listen carefully and communicate effectively because ideas can be shared easily thereby enabling the parties to take into account each other's challenges and desires (Thompson, 2005). When people create a positive environment around them it becomes possible for constructive discussions to take place which raises the chances of attaining a win-win outcome.

3.3.4 Exploration

At this level negotiators examine more closely what is being discussed; they try to find out why those involved have taken such stands or made those demands by looking behind each party's position towards understanding its interests and motivations better than before any negotiation took place between them. To discover areas where there can be mutual agreement it is necessary that open-ended questions should be asked while showing empathy through active listening (Lewicki, Saunders & Barry, 2016). Sharing information becomes a priority during exploration so that commonality may be identified upon which solutions benefiting all sides could rest on later.

3.3.5 Bargaining

During the negotiation process, bartering is a valuable tool that relies on making compromises. This means giving and counter proposals to get agreement which all parties find acceptable. At this point negotiators often must be creative and flexible, as they must think strategically to maximize benefits while satisfying both sides' needs (Thompson, 2005). Communication skills which are effective, such as persuasion or influence, ought to be used so that agreements can be reached in order to be satisfactory to all parties involved. In bargaining people may consider different options, test initial offers against each other through back-and forth discussion until gaps are bridged and common ground is found.

Giving in, on the other hand, necessitates making sacrifices or concessions throughout the phases of the negotiating process until both parties involved achieve a resolution (Fisher et al., 2011). During this phase a deadlock can occur, which gives room for employing various strategies like revising issues under consideration, evaluating alternative solutions or introducing new ideas targeted at overcoming these obstacles.

3.3.6 Exchange and Deal Closing

The negotiation process ends with the closing stage. This is where the agreement is made official by the parties involved. In this phase, negotiators have to deal with uncertainties that remain, finalize details and put the agreement in writing (Lewicki, Saunders & Barry, 2016). They need to make sure that all sides understand what has been agreed upon as well as their respective duties and expectations towards each other. The recapitulation is very important at this point to highlight the different points of the agreement. Furthermore, exchange and conclusion of the transaction may need to address any lingering concerns or concerns for mutual satisfaction and commitment to the deal (Cohen, 2014). Trust is built through

positive conclusions of negotiations which in turn fosters long-term relationships hence creating a basis for future partnerships.

3.3.7 Implementation

Even though implementation is not a phase in negotiation, it is an important post-negotiation stage where parties meet their obligations and ensure compliance with agreed terms. For implementation to be effective there must be clear communication channels, constant checking as well as put in place systems for dealing with possible problems or disagreements that could occur (Thompson, 2018). When successfully done so, this aids in building credibility in the process of negotiation while at the same time strengthening trust among all participants.

3.3.8 Review and Evaluation

At the end of a negotiation, it is very important to make a complete examination and assessment of what has been done and achieved. Reflecting on negotiation helps individuals recognize their learning, assess how well they have performed in terms of tactics used and identify areas that need improvement (Lewicki, Saunders & Barry, 2016). Such a stage enlightens future negotiations while also enhancing better methods and approaches and contributing to overall professional growth in the negotiation settings of any organization. Finally, this comprehensive evaluation process not only improves the preparation and strategy in future negotiations but also boosts confidence and competence, resulting in more effective and mutually beneficial outcomes.

4. Ethical Considerations and Cross-Cultural Dynamics in Negotiation

Negotiation, a crucial part of human interaction, includes the interchange of information, concepts, and compromises to achieve mutually advantageous agreements. But negotiation is also about ethics; it takes into consideration what's right and wrong in different cultures, as well as how they affect the process and outcomes of negotiation. This study will examine how ethical principles relate to cross-cultural dynamics during negotiations by identifying key areas for improvement when dealing with such challenges.

To negotiate successfully in different environments, people need awareness about cultural nuances, values and communication styles. Morals guide individuals towards being truthful, reliable and forming lasting relationships beyond single transactions. Accordingly, bargaining becomes a multi-faceted approach that combines tactics with good conduct based on understanding other people's customs.

4.1 Ethical Considerations in Negotiation

Ethical considerations are a set of values which serve as a basis for behavior and choice-making in negotiations. Negotiators often struggle with the basic ethical dilemma of balancing honesty with desired outcomes (Lewicki, Saunders & Barry, 2016). It is common to be tempted into using deceitful strategies or withholding information to gain competitive advantage. However, these actions can destroy trust and compromise the integrity of talks thereby endangering chances for win-win solutions.

Another essential element of ethical negotiation practice is equity (Fisher & Shapiro, 2005). Negotiators should ensure that the agreement parameters are fair and just to all parties involved. This requires recognizing other people's interests and positions, avoiding exploitation based on power imbalance and refraining from engaging in any unethical conduct which may undermine the process integrity.

Moreover, ethical negotiations uphold the importance of considering stakeholders' concerns (Lewicki, Saunders & Barry, 2016). Active listening by negotiators to others' worries and needs and demonstrating empathy towards them while seeking win-win results would satisfy various groups affected. Respecting other points of view increases inclusivity in

negotiating more credible agreements, leading to longer-term connections among partners who may collaborate in the future.

Last but not least, transparent communication channels throughout bargaining stages are valued within ethical practices of negotiation (Lewicki, Saunders & Barry, 2016). Establishing open lines ensures trust building between different sides involved in talks and provides fair access to relevant data. Creating an atmosphere where participants can freely share their thoughts enables problem-solving around misunderstandings thus striving for acceptable solutions by all parties concerned.

4.2 Cross-Cultural Negotiation

Cross-cultural negotiation makes the process of negotiation difficult because negotiators have to deal with differences in cultural values, communication methods and decision-making styles (Gelfand, Brett & Gunia, 2011). Cultural misunderstandings can be a big challenge leading to breakdowns in communication, trust and cooperation.

Understanding and adapting to differences in communication styles and norms is one of the main challenges faced by cross-cultural negotiators (Gelfand, Brett & Gunia, 2011). While some cultures promote directness and clarity in communication others prefer indirectness or implicitness. As a result, negotiators should know these variations among cultures, which necessitates the modification of communication tactics to reach mutual understanding and respect.

Negotiators should also take into consideration different practices regarding negotiations due to culture dissimilarities (Gelfand, Brett & Gunia, 2011). In some cultures, it may be necessary for people to first establish relationships or build trust before embarking on substantive talks while other cultures may adopt task-oriented approaches right from the start. Therefore, it is important that an individual recognizes these preferences and adjusts his/her negotiation technique accordingly thereby fostering good working relationships with counterparts who come from different cultural backgrounds.

Ethics become part and parcel of cross-cultural negotiation when cultural variation in ethical standards and norms are taken care of by the negotiators themselves (Gelfand, Brett & Gunia, 2011). What constitutes “good” behavior in one society may not necessarily be seen so by another society thus showing how critical awareness about cultures is during ethical decision-making processes across borders. For this reason, people who negotiate must

demonstrate that they comprehend many different perspectives depending on their backgrounds in order to avoid violating any cultural standard.

Lastly, cultural intelligence (CQ) significantly contributes towards successful cross-cultural negotiations because it enables individuals to appreciate various diversities (Earley & Ang, 2003). This involves adjusting oneself according to different cultural contexts through behaviors modification as well communication strategies. Developing CQ requires cultural sensitivity training, exposure to diverse cultures and continuous self-reflection among others. A high level of CQ aids in bridging understanding gaps between nations during talks by ensuring that ethics are not compromised due to a lack of knowledge of what values mean in another country.

5. Methodology

The objective of this research is to observe individuals' reactions before and during negotiations and to examine their behavior, approaches, and skills based on their level of experience.

The basic questions this study aims to answer are the following:

1. What are individuals' actions before a negotiation?
2. What are their behaviors throughout the negotiation?
3. How do individuals with negotiation experience differ in their attitudes and approaches compared to those without negotiation experience?

In this section, the author will clarify the choice of a quantitative research approach, delineate the research methodology, elaborate on the data collection process, and elaborate on the data analysis strategies utilized.

5.1 Research Methodology

Selecting between a quantitative and qualitative research approach is essential before beginning any investigation. Thus, it is important to discuss these two approaches and provide evidence for the one that was chosen for this research.

In research, two ways of gathering and analyzing information are quantitative and qualitative methods. Each of them has its pros as well as cons. Depending on the objectives or questions of a study, either one may be used alone or sometimes combined with another.

Quantitative approaches include collecting numbers that can be counted and analyzing them statistically. These structured data collection techniques involve surveys, experiments, observations with predetermined categories among others. Statistical techniques are used in analyzing such data to bring out patterns, relationships or associations within it. For instance, content analysis, statistical analysis, surveys and experiments are some examples (Smith 2015).

On the other hand, qualitative methods gather non-numerical information that is descriptive as well as subjective. Quite often, these approaches are used to analyze intricate occurrences from various viewpoints. For instance, some of the qualitative techniques used to collect data include interviews, focus groups, observations, and analysis of texts among others.

Moreover, during qualitative data analysis, data is interpreted to bring out themes, patterns or even insights which may involve coding and thematic analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

When researchers want to test hypotheses, measure relationships between variables with precision or generalize findings to larger populations they may opt for quantitative methods. Conversely, if the aim is to deeply investigate something, understand where it takes place within its environment or come up with new theories/hypotheses then qualitative methods would be appropriate. Quantitative and qualitative approaches both have their strengths as well as limitations therefore depending on such factors like research questions, objectives, nature of phenomenon under study among others a decision can be made on which one should be adopted.

This dissertation is concerned with the formulation of questions and answer options which investigates people's behavior before and during negotiation. While it may seem that a qualitative approach would be most suitable for gaining insight into negotiating approaches that experienced or unexperienced negotiators use, there exist methods/scales which though typically employed in quantitative studies, can still serve qualitative purposes (Drexler 2022). A quantitative instrument capable of analyzing qualitative information. And this scale was used in this thesis to measure non-numeric concepts in order to enable numeric analysis at a later stage.

5.2 Gathering Data

The next part will explain what survey tool was chosen to collect the data and how it is analyzed. Data collection is an important part of any project or study, thus it's necessary to choose appropriate tools for this purpose.

5.2.1 Choosing a Method

The most suitable method to gather data for this purpose is via questionnaires. Questionnaires are commonly used in research because they have many benefits. The first advantage is that they allow researchers to gather information from a large and diverse group of people quickly (Babbie, 2016). This means that questionnaires can be sent out to a wider range of participants without being limited by geography or time zone differences. Such scalability is particularly important for studies that need big sample sizes to obtain statistically significant results.

Secondly, questionnaires ensure uniformity when collecting data (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). When all participants are given the same set of questions, it helps prevent bias and promotes consistency in the answers provided. This approach is aligned with the purpose of this dissertation, which is to collect original data about individuals' behavior in negotiations or how they imagine themselves in such a procedure. Standardizing the process also makes it possible for different groups or points in time to be compared easily which improves reliability as well as validity of collected information.

5.2.2 Conducting the Survey

In order to create a research questionnaire (see Appendix 1), the literature was reviewed thoroughly before distributing it electronically.

Certain criteria should be met to select to which individuals the questionnaire will be sent. To begin with, there must be two groups of people, one with experience and one with zero experience in negotiations. For the experienced group, the criterion to select which individual will participate in the survey was a minimum of one year of negotiation experience. The identification of these individuals will be conducted through social networks, employing a filtering parameter tailored to individuals engaged in procurement, sales, or roles where negotiation constitutes a routine aspect of their responsibilities. On the other hand, for the inexperienced people, the primary criterion for selecting survey participants was the absence of prior experience in negotiations.

The standards for the selection of survey respondents were designed to make certain that the gathered facts would be applicable enough to address the goals of research and provide useful information on negotiation experiences. For example, minimum one year of negotiating background was set as a requirement for being an experienced respondent. This was done to attract people with expertise in this area and who have dealt with negotiations frequently, hence, they are familiar with them. The intention is to include different points of view which can only be got from those individuals having wide-ranging practical knowledge about bargaining to enrich the quality as well as quantity of our data collected.

Furthermore, the identification of experienced individuals through social networks, particularly those engaged in procurement, sales, or roles involving frequent negotiation, was chosen to target a specific demographic known to possess relevant expertise in

negotiation practices. This approach will increase the chances of finding participants who can offer valuable insights based on their work experience backgrounds.

Conversely, for the inexperienced group, the criterion of lacking prior experience in negotiations was selected to capture perspectives from individuals who may approach negotiation scenarios with fresh perspectives or limited preconceptions. Therefore, the goal is to examine how least skilled individuals perceive and manage negotiations thereby providing additional dimensions alongside what more knowledgeable respondents may say about similar matters.

5.2.3 Questionnaire

Concerning the formulation of the questionnaire, it was systematically divided into three parts. The questionnaire must be the same for both groups to examine the discrepancies in their answers. The initial part served the purpose of gathering demographic information pertaining to the participants, including location, age, and information of what their position in their organization is and how many years they have experience with negotiations.

The second part included questions aiming to examine the individuals' behavior and approaches before the negotiation. The following 16 questions/sentences were designed to collect data about 1. information gathering before the negotiation, 2. the planning phase where important parameters are considered, 3. setting goals and 4. negotiation strategies. The third and last section of the questionnaire consisted of questions designed to assess each person's conduct during a negotiation. 21 questions/sentences were carefully chosen to gather information about 1. the opening stage of the negotiation, 2. the exploration and information exchange stage, 3. the applied approaches, policies, and tactics that the individual chose, 4. the cultural and ethical considerations and 5. the post negotiation activities of the individuals.

The questionnaire was emailed to the chosen negotiators/people as soon as it was completed. Anonymity was confirmed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and the email was followed by a disclaimer that made it clear that the information gathered—including opinions and experiences—would only be used for this master's thesis and would not be shared with other parties. The Likert scale was used in the formulation of the questionnaire, which was distributed electronically for the respondent's convenience. English was used to deliver the answers.

The data was analyzed once the surveys were collected and finished. Although the data is not representative of all negotiators/individuals' behavior before and during a negotiation, due to the small number of participants, insightful conclusions may still be drawn. The Likert scale and the methodology used to analyze the questionnaire are covered in the section that follows.

5.2.4 Likert Scale

The Likert scale is an instrument created by Rensis Likert in 1932 for measuring attitudes, opinions and perceptions in research and survey methods. It employs a systematic method where individuals indicate to what extent they agree or disagree with a set of statements or questions. This tool has been used widely across different disciplines such as psychology, sociology, education, business administration and health sciences (Likert, 1932).

Typically, the Likert scale gives respondents a series of options for their answers, often ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” These options are typically spaced apart by five or seven points, although some surveys may use more or fewer (Jamieson, 2004). It can be employed in many formats because it is such a user-friendly and undemanding method — paper questionnaires as well as online forms (Reja et al., 2003). Adding more response alternatives might increase confusion and cognitive load for participants, thus affecting the scale's validity and reliability. More reaction options in a survey led to a wider range of answers given by respondents but also more uncertainty amongst them due to ambiguousness (Krosnick & Fabrigar, 1997). A meta-analysis found that having excessive numbers of choices can make people tired which will result in lower quality data collected from these surveys (Preston & Colman, 2000).

Using the Likert scale in a questionnaire has many advantages such as its straightforwardness which increases the number of replies received and lowers respondent fatigue or confusion thus improving the accuracy of collected information (Reja et al., 2003). Secondly, the Likert scale helps in obtaining quantitative data where attitudes, opinions and perceptions are measured by numbers that can be statistically analyzed for scientific validity (Norman, 2010). The structured nature of this instrument ensures uniformity in answers given as well as ease in understanding what the figures represent thereby enabling researchers to make meaningful deductions from survey findings (Jamieson, 2004). Furthermore, it fosters comparability between various groups or samples which may be useful for cross-sectional or longitudinal analysis (Norman, 2010). Using the

Likert scale consistently across different demographics enables researchers to compare responses directly among dissimilar groups like age sets, sexes, or cultures. So, patterns can be identified and trends and variations in attitude or opinion across different population segments can be detected.

5.3 Analysis

For the questionnaire a five-point scale was employed, with five potential responses to each statement or question. Each response was assigned a numerical score, enabling the study of quantitative data, recalling that qualitative data gains quantitative significance via the Likert scale (Mahmutovic 2020). A five-point scale would be easier for the participants to use, as the objective of the survey would be clearer. Also, it would provide sufficient information and avoid confusion or difficulty caused by too many alternatives.

The analysis of the data obtained from the Likert scale relied on the ordinal nature of the data. There was no statistical undertaking that would involve performing tests such as t-tests, ANOVA, or regression analysis, aimed at probing into relationships between variables and test hypotheses (Preston & Colman, 2000). Moreover, given that the Likert scale produces ordinal data and the distances between points cannot be regarded as equal, the mean score was not computed for the data (Mahmutovic 2020). Consequently, the number-point that appeared the most, known as mode score, was determined in order to analyze our data (Mahmutovic 2020). After that, a graphical presentation of the results was made in Chapter 6, to visualize the contrasts between experienced and inexperienced individuals and further analyze their differentiation in the negotiation approaches.

6. Results

This chapter will display the findings from the submitted questionnaires in either a graphical or tabular style, followed by a full analysis and discussion. Each question/statement on the questionnaire served a particular purpose. The first section was designed in this manner to get general information and demographics about the participants. The second and third parts focused on the research topic and they served the purpose of collecting the opinions and experiences of the participants about their behavior before and during the negotiations. The general information is presented in section 6.1, while the results from before and during the negotiation are presented in sections 6.2 and 6.3, respectively. The multiple-choice questions used the Likert scale, so participants were given five alternative answers to choose the one that best represented their opinions. There was only one open question in the general information-demographics section, which did not require answering, and its intent was to identify in which field the participants worked. The data was exported to Microsoft Office Excel to be analyzed.

6.1 General Information

6.1.1 Demographics

To begin with, participants were asked to answer certain demographic questions. It is worth mentioning that the questionnaire was exclusively issued to individuals from Greece, so this research indicated how the negotiations are handled in Greece and what their citizens were thinking of when they heard this word. So, our interests were primarily focused on their gender and the age group they belong to. Figure 3 indicates our effort to distribute the questionnaire equally to male and female participants. Thus, 46.8% of participants were female and 48.9% were male.

Gender:
47 responses

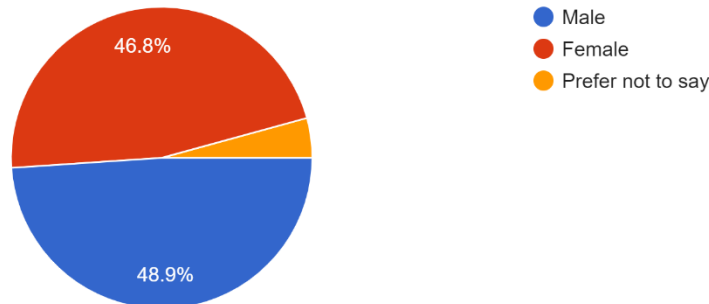


Figure 3. Gender of the participants who participated in the survey.

The age groups of the participants are presented in Table 1. It is noticeable that the majority of participants age group were between 25 and 34 years old (28 individuals). The primary focus was to find participants between the ages of 25 and 44, because at this stage of career development, people usually make considerable progress. They tend to take on more responsibility, potentially move into management roles, and see substantial income growth. It is a period when employees are very productive and committed at their work (Cunningham, 2019).

Age Groups (years)	Number of Participants
24 or less	2
25 to 34	28
35 to 44	7
45 to 54	9
55 to 64	1

Table 1. Age of Participants

6.1.2 Experience

The study also gathered information from the participants about their employment status, in which sector they are employed and the number of years of experience they had with negotiations. Firstly, about the working status, Figure 4 shows that 95,7% of our participants are currently working. For this research, it was important to include the opinions of

unemployed individuals to increase the variety of negotiation approaches and notice any divergences and convergences.

Are you currently working?
47 responses

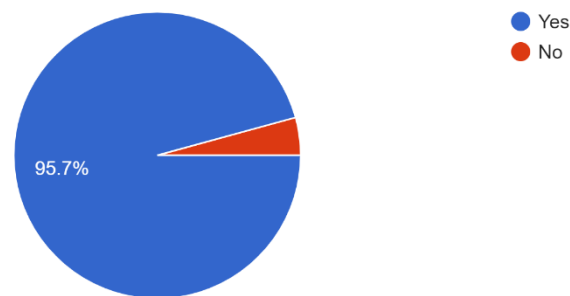


Figure 4. Employment status.

Table 2 provides information about the field in which participants are currently working. For the purposes of this study, it was necessary to identify people for whom negotiations constitute an essential component of their job duties, like employees from commercial or purchasing departments. Moreover, the insights from various departments and divisions, which may use negotiations more simplistically, were essential to increase the variety of opinions.

Professional Field	Number of Participants
Engineering	9
Commercial	8
Purchasing	6
Finance	6
Hospitality	3
Supply Chain	2
Technology	2
R&D	2
Agriculture	1

Table 2. Participants' professional field. 39 answers out of 47 participants were collected.

Additional data gathered from the study participants included the duration of their experience in negotiations. Experience of participants is an essential topic, as a main objective of this research is to understand the approaches between experienced and inexperienced individuals, as well as the similarities and deviations in their responses. According to research, negotiation skills increase drastically over time through constant practice. Mostly, it takes consistent participation in negotiation activities for a period of between three and five years which enables individuals to grow and polish their abilities (Thompson, 2015). So, for the purposes of our research, we will consider a negotiator as experienced, if he has more than 4 years of experience in this area.

As shown in Figure 5 out of total 47 participants, 23 had more than 4 years of experience in negotiations, while 7 had up to 4 years of experience, 2 had up to 2 years of experience, 3 had 1 year of experience and the rest of participants less than 6 months of experience. It is worth mentioning that most experienced negotiators (with more than 4 years of experience) of our sample are spotted in the commercial department. Table 3 shows us the professional fields of our sample with more than 4 years of negotiation experience, sorted from the bigger number to the smaller.

How long have you had experience with negotiations?
47 responses

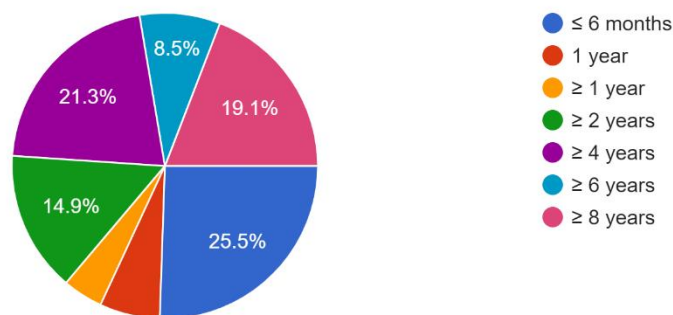


Figure 5. Time of experience in negotiations.

Professional Field	Number of Participants with more than 4 years of negotiation experience
Commercial	7
Engineering	5
Purchasing	3
Supply Chain	2
Finance	1
R&D	1

Table 3. Number of Participants with more than 4 years of negotiation experience based on their professional field.

6.2 Before the Negotiation

This section will provide the results from 16 different questions/statements related to the preparatory phase before the negotiation. The section of the questionnaire was divided into four inseparable subsections, which play a significant role in the outcome: information gathering, planning phase, setting goals and negotiation strategies.

6.2.1 Information Gathering

One important preparatory step before the negotiation is to gather information about the subject and the opposite party. According to research, time invested in the preparatory phase is an important predictor of negotiation outcomes. It has been shown through studies that negotiators who spend more time collecting and assessing information tend to have better negotiation results compared to those with less preparation in pre-negotiations (Thompson, Wang & Gunia, 2010). The reason for this is that negotiators who are well prepared are more skillful at using data to make correct decisions, forecasting possible objections, and adapting to changing circumstances during negotiations (Neale & Bazerman, 1991).

As indicated in Figure 6, 80.9% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that research and information gathering takes time or that they will need time to research and gather the proper information. It was a statement that 41% of inexperienced individuals and 43% of experienced negotiators, with more than 4 years of experience, strongly agreed. This statement could be answered correctly with rationality and not only with experience, as it takes time to do something correctly.

Contrary to the assertion that it is not important to know the other party’s needs and understand their point of view, research on negotiation underscores the importance of understanding all parties’ interests and perspectives. Successful negotiations are more likely when all the parties understand each other’s necessities, motives, and barriers (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 2011). Negotiations are not zero-sum games but typically entail integrative bargaining which means that if both parties’ interests can be understood and satisfied then there can be value creation and pie expansion (Lewicki, Saunders & Barry, 2016). The negotiators, by knowing what their counterpart anticipates, can therefore tailor their proposals in a manner that will most likely make them accepted, resulting in better outcomes for all.

Figure 7 shows this right disagreement with the statement, as 28 participants ticked the “strongly disagree” option, while 7 more participants disagreed with the statement, thus creating 74.5% of total disagreement. It is worth noting that the 6 participants (12.8% of our sample) who strongly agreed with this statement and created dispersion in our observations, were mainly in the inexperienced group of the participants (5 out of 6 were with less than 4 years of experience on negotiations).

1. It takes time for research and information gathering in the preparatory phase of negotiation.
47 responses

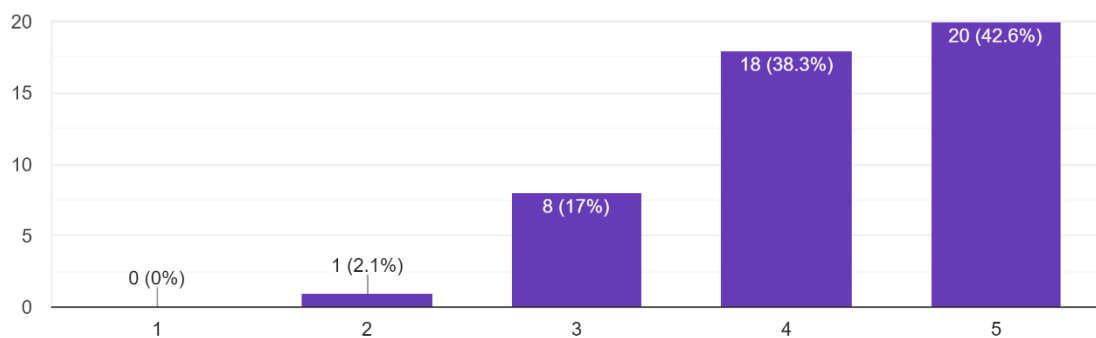


Figure 6. Information gathering in the preparatory phase of negotiation.

2. It is not important to know the other party's needs and understand their point of view.

47 responses

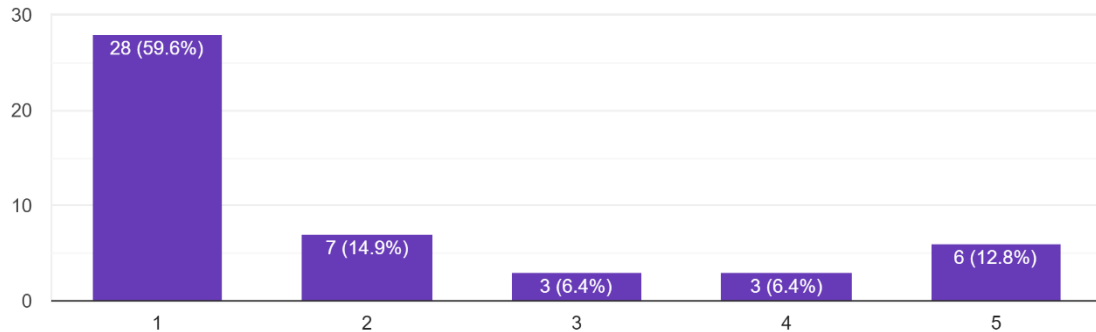


Figure 7. Knowledge of the other party's needs and understanding of their point of view.

6.2.2 Planning Phase

Right planning is the quintessence of a successful negotiation and time must be invested in the preparatory in order to be achieved. To begin with, deep preparation assists negotiators to get hold of important facts concerning the interests, requirements and constraints that bind all parties concerned (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 2011). This knowledge is vital for identifying areas where value can be added and for framing proposals that meet the real concerns on both sides. By planning effectively, negotiators establish clear targets, as they anticipate possible difficulties ahead of time and determine how to manage them (Lewicki, Barry, & Saunders, 2016). As indicated in Figure 8, most participants (91,5%) “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that negotiation preparation and right planning contribute to value generation and reaching mutually advantageous agreements, while 8.5% remained neutral.

4. To what extent do you agree that negotiation preparation and right planning contribute to value generation and reaching mutually advantageous agreements?

47 responses

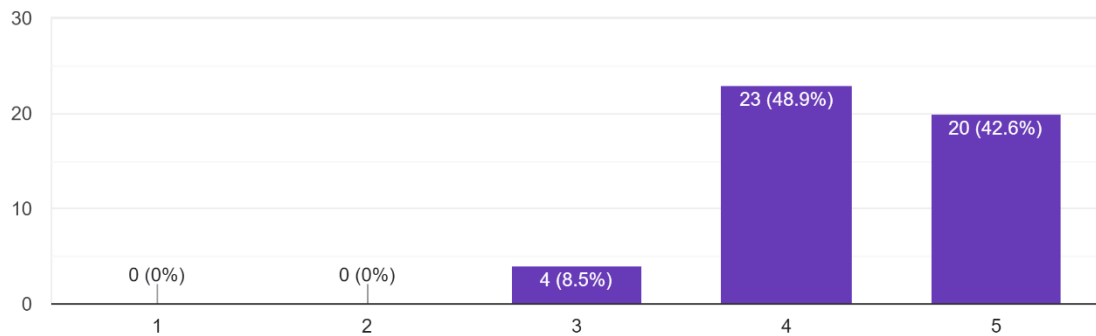


Figure 8. Negotiation preparation and right planning.

A well-defined communication plan is helpful in reaching satisfactory negotiation results. The way effective communication channelizes the process of negotiation is by providing accurate information, limiting misunderstandings and making it explicit to respective parties about positions as well as interests (Lewicki, Barry, & Saunders, 2016). A planned communication system helps negotiators present their arguments coherently, respond properly to the concerns of the other party in a timely and respectful manner. Figure 9 shows that 46.8% and 44.7% of people “agreed” and “strongly agreed” respectively that a well-defined communication plan contributes to successful negotiation outcomes. Three participants chose to remain neutral, while one person strongly disagreed, so the dispersion of the answers wasn’t big.

3. Do you believe a well-defined communication plan contributes to successful negotiation outcomes?

47 responses

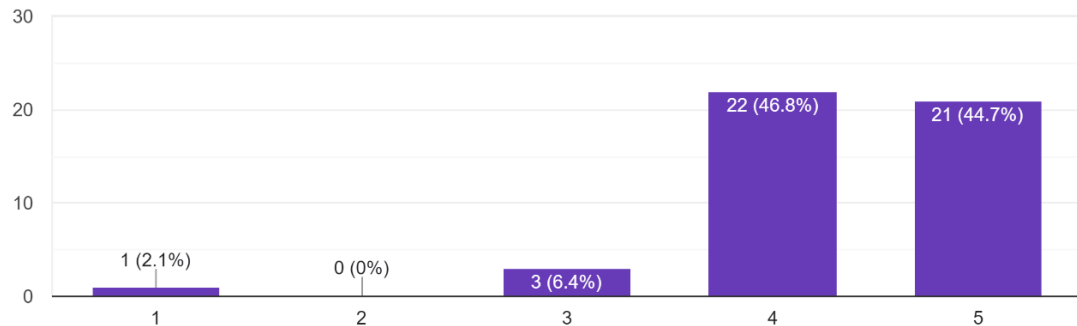


Figure 9. Viewpoint about communication plan.

One key element in the planning process is effective team planning. Pooling diverse skills, knowledge and perspectives is one of the key advantages of team planning. Teamwork can bring together the varied experiences of different individuals in order to come up with better solutions when faced with complex problems. Teams are able to apportion work among members based on their individual competence thereby ensuring more efficient employment of limited resources. This distribution of tasks enables teams to approach large-scale projects having several components faster than individuals who may be bounded by one's own professional competence or abilities (Hackman, 2002). While 44.7% and 36.2% of people “agreed” and “strongly agreed” respectively, as shown in Figure 10, there were 9 participants who neither agreed nor disagreed. Six out of nine participants in this category were in the inexperienced group.

Is it right to focus solely on our interests without understanding those of our counterparts? This is a typical but unconstructive negotiation where one concentrates on individual interests when preparing, not minding what the other party needs. For a negotiation process to be successful, we should know our interests as well as those of the other parties involved. Disregarding counterparty interest is likely to result in missed opportunities for creating value and reaching agreements beneficial to all parties involved. So, the disagreement of this question is captured in Figure 11, as 29 people “strongly disagreed” and 11 “disagreed”, while 3 participants remained neutral and 4 “agreed”.

5. Effective team planning leads to significant results than individual efforts.

47 responses

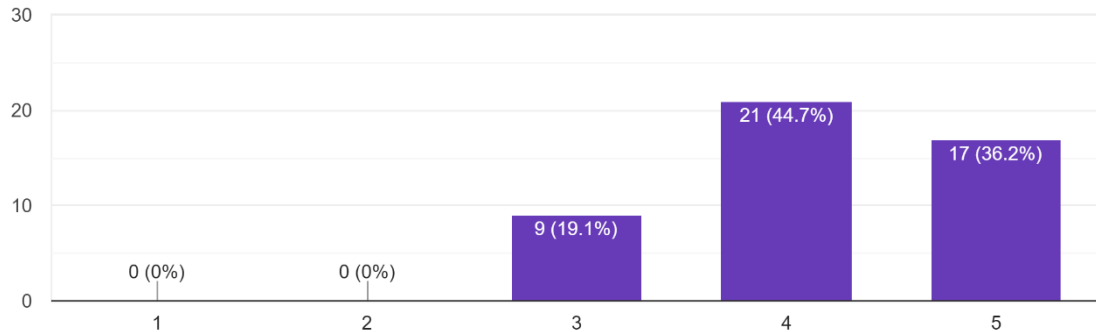


Figure 10. Effective team planning.

6. During the preparation process, I examine my own interests without understanding those of my counterparts.

47 responses

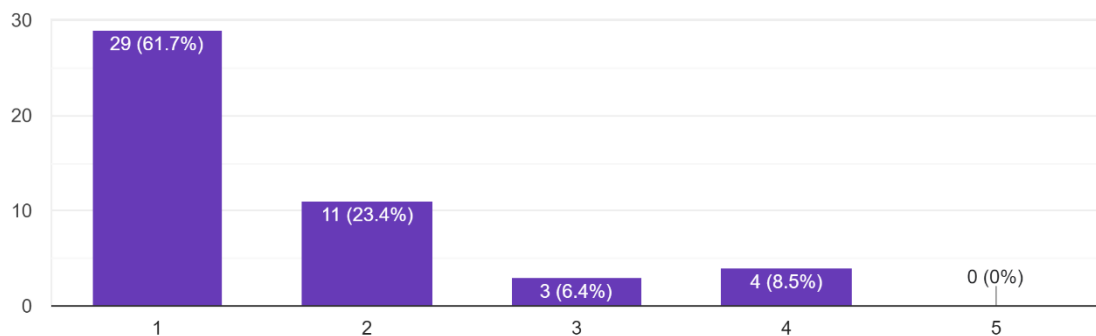


Figure 11. Interests in negotiations.

Evaluating possible risks is an important preparation step. It is difficult to identify them during the negotiation process, especially in complex or high-pressure circumstances. Risk recognition cannot be done without prior documentation and preparation, which makes deliberate and systematic analysis essential. An effective preparation also results in better communication and negotiation strategies. If risks have already been identified and documented, negotiators can develop contingency plans while highlighting their problems leading to better handling of such risks during the bargaining process (Malhotra & Bazerman, 2008). Figure 12 demonstrates that the vast majority of people were neutral about

if they can easily recognize potential risks in the negotiation without noting them beforehand. As can be noticed from this figure there is a big dispersion to the answers, without a specific pattern.

7. I can easily recognize potential risks in the negotiation without noting them beforehand.

47 responses

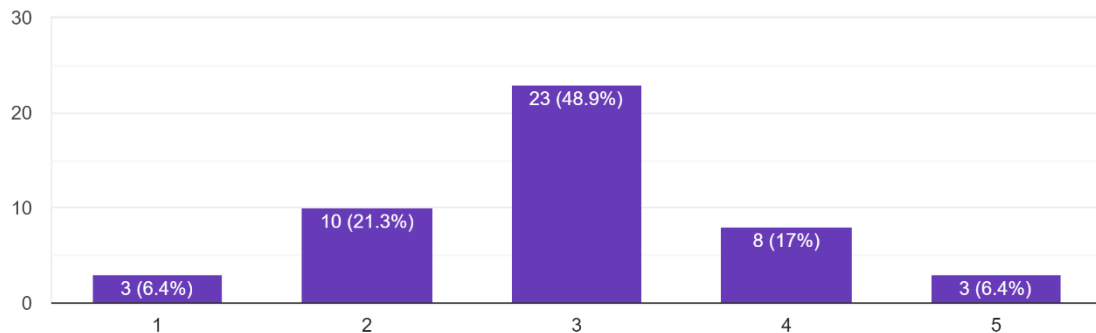


Figure 12. Potential risks in the negotiation.

One of the main tasks before a negotiation is to calculate the cost of concessions. When negotiators understand the cost of concessions, they will be in a better position to make well-judged decisions on what they can afford to sacrifice and what they should keep, resulting in more strategic and effective outcomes of negotiation. For example, it is necessary for the parties involved in a negotiation to determine how much each party is willing to give up before entering into any agreement. The main purpose for this pre-negotiation preparation is to ensure that the negotiators already know what would make them walk away from potential agreements and understand those areas where conceding could have disastrous consequences (Bazerman & Moore, 2012). So, simply put, knowing that an organization or individual must protect their interests always maintains them in a strong bargaining position thereby avoiding long-term disadvantageous contracts. As shown in Figure 13, 59.6% of respondents agreed that the 'cost' of concessions must be estimated before negotiation, with 17% strongly agreeing, while 23.4% of the participants remained neutral. It was noticed that 13 out of the 14 participants that are working in the Commercial or Purchasing department and conduct a large number of negotiations agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

8. The "cost" of concessions is something that must be calculated before the negotiation.

47 responses

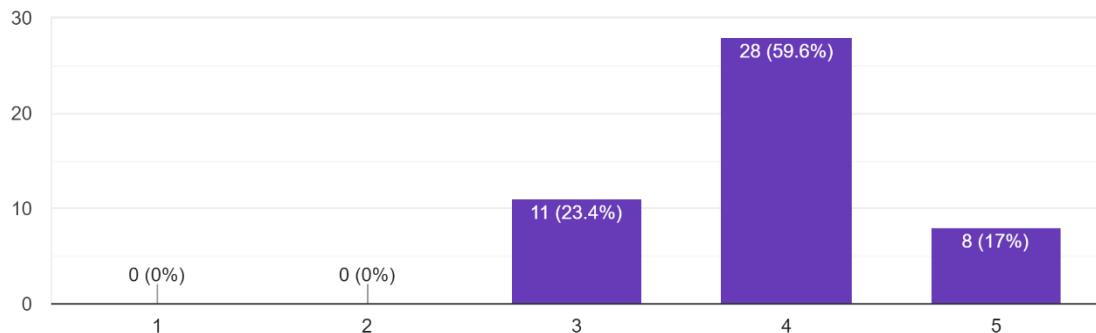


Figure 13. Cost of concessions.

6.2.3 Setting Goals

Goal setting is a vital stage in the preparatory process. Once a goal is apparent, it gives negotiators an idea of their priorities, helps to create strategies and makes it possible for the negotiation to be monitored. There are many reasons why it is important to make goals and objectives ahead of negotiation. Clearly defined objectives enable negotiators to know where to direct and what they must focus on all through the negotiation process to achieve their goals (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 2011). By having specific objectives, the negotiators will be able to decide on what their priorities should be as well as any limitations that exist for them to achieve those goals. They can therefore make wise choices concerning concessions and determine if a deal meets their least acceptable standards or not (Lewicki, Barry, & Saunders, 2016). If aims are not well-defined, negotiators risk making concessions that could undermine their core interests. In Figure 14 the level of agreement on how critical it is to spend time to establish precise objectives and goals before the negotiation is depicted. Specifically, 28 participants chose to agree strongly, and 16 agreed, creating a proportion of 93,6%. Only two people neither agreed nor disagreed, while one disagreed.

9. Spending time to establish precise objectives and goals before the negotiation is critical.

47 responses

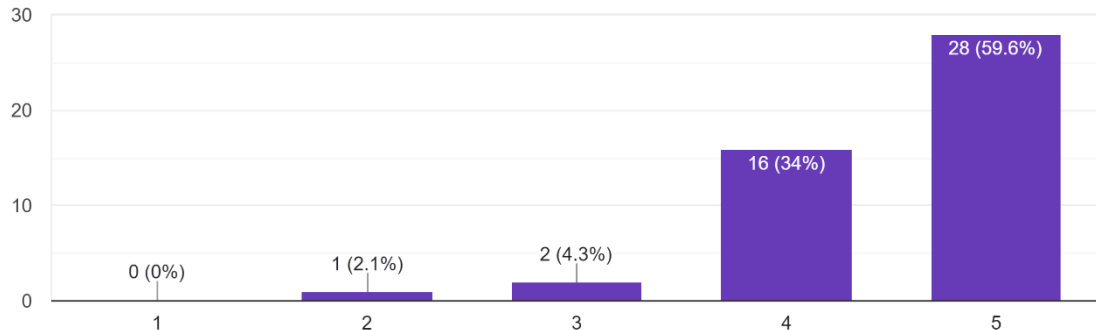


Figure 14. Objectives and goals.

Effective planning and negotiation strategy requires prioritization and trade-offs evaluations. Not all goals have the same level of importance in achieving successful results. Negotiators who are effective understand that they should differentiate between core objectives and ones which are more flexible. This kind of prioritization will enable negotiators to put their efforts towards getting the most important results with a possibility for concessions on non-critical matters (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 2011). Furthermore, assessing possible trade-offs is an integral part of the negotiation process. Trade-offs help negotiators to look for solutions that are beneficial to all parties involved in terms of their basic interests. Neglecting potential trade-offs, however, makes these negotiators rigid thereby risking impasses being reached leading to missed opportunities for value creation. In Figure 15, most of the participants (38.3%) disagreed that all goals are equally important, thus objectives and trade-offs need to be prioritized. The dispersion here was big, as 12.8% “strongly disagreed”, 31.9% were neutral with this statement, 14.9% agreed, while only 2.1% “strongly agreed”. Opinions varied and there was no majority of specific responses based on the group the participants were in (experienced or inexperienced).

10. All goals are important and that's why I don't prioritize objectives and evaluate potential trade-offs.

47 responses

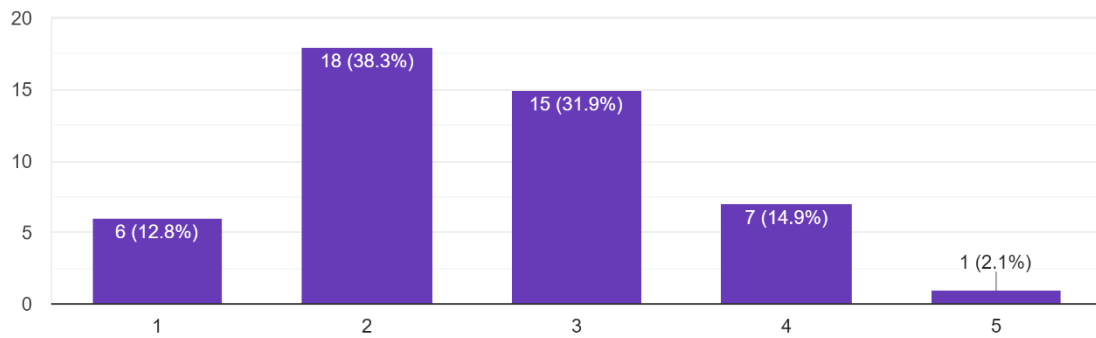


Figure 15. Objectives prioritization and trade-offs evaluation.

In the course of negotiation, it is important to change limits and goals to adjust with shifts in circumstances. Negotiations are dynamic by nature and frequently unpredictable. Therefore, they must be approached with flexibility in order to navigate them effectively and optimize outcomes. Negotiators can use flexible limits and goals for quick adaptation in response to new information or changing conditions. Negotiating often does not go according to plan, therefore being able to modify targets based on new developments is what distinguishes between success and failure (Thompson, 2005). For instance, if there are additional facts which come up or the other party's priorities change, negotiators who have set their goals rigidly may lose out on possibilities of mutual gainful deals. As indicated to Figure 16, 20 and 9 individuals "agreed" and "strongly agreed" respectively that it is important to set flexible limits and goals to adapt to changing circumstances during negotiation, while 15 participants had a neutral attitude and 3 "disagreed".

11. It is important to set flexible limits and goals to adapt to changing circumstances during negotiation.

47 responses

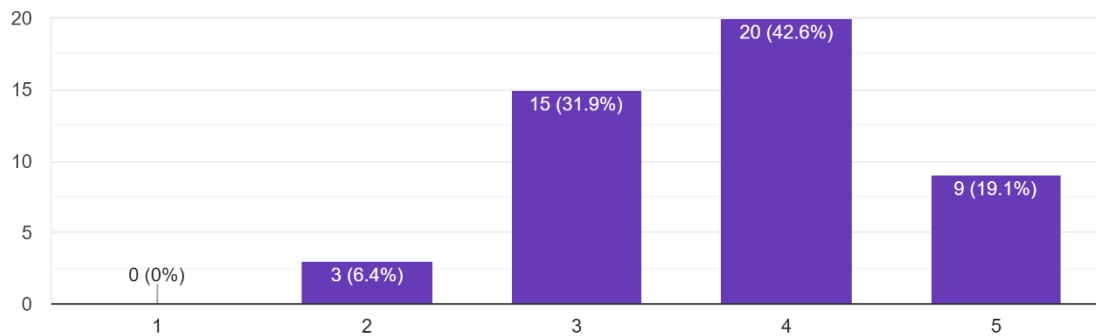


Figure 16. Objectives prioritization and trade-offs evaluation.

Setting SMART goals, meaning Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound, is essential for every successful negotiation. On the 12th question of the questionnaire, the participants were required to answer the following: Let's say you are a buyer, and your plan is to achieve a price decrease for a specific product. Do you agree that this is a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) goal? Figure 17 showed a big variation in their answers, as 8 responded with "strongly agree", 18 of them "agreed", 14 were "neither agreed nor disagreed", 4 "disagreed" and 1 person "strongly disagreed". As for the right answer to this question: it depends. For instance, if the product will not be purchased within a year and then the price decrease will be absorbed by the supplier, then the goal is not SMART, as many parameters are missing. The right policy here was to remain neutral, as goals were not properly defined. Surprisingly enough, more inexperienced negotiators remained neutral on this field, as 9 out of 14 people who chose the "neither agree nor disagree" button were by the inexperienced group of people.

12. Let's say you are a buyer, and your plan is to achieve a price decrease for a specific product. Do you agree that this is a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) goal?

47 responses

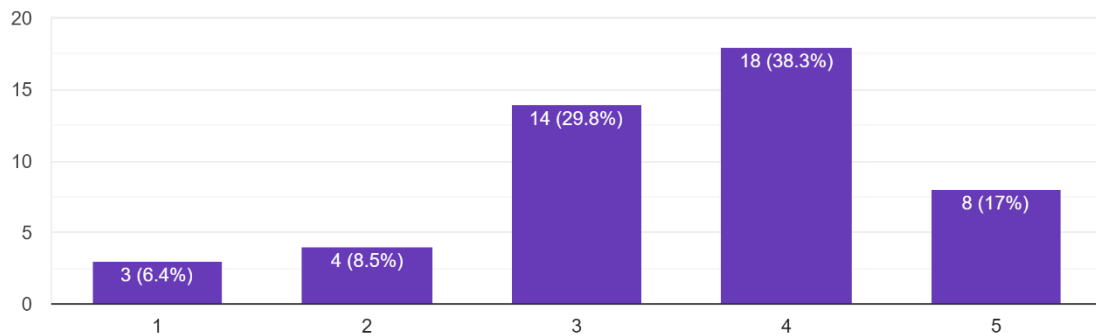


Figure 17. S.M.A.R.T. goals.

6.2.4 Negotiation Strategies

The last and very important step that needs to be arranged before a negotiation is to develop the right strategy depending on the situation. Of paramount importance is developing negotiation strategies that are suited to the specific context and goals of the negotiation process. Tailored negotiation approaches foster a deeper comprehension of the particular interests, needs, and aspirations of both sides involved in it. Such understanding helps in creating solutions that are mutually beneficial and more likely to be accepted by all parties concerned (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 2011). A one-size-fits-all approach usually neglects decisive subtleties that can make or break a deal. Additionally, tailored strategies also promote flexibility and adaptability. Negotiations are dynamic processes, and the ability to modify strategies as circumstances change requires vital information which is crucial. As showed to Figure 18, the level of agreement on the importance of developing negotiation strategies tailored to the specific context and goals of the negotiation process was 83% (53.2% agree and 29.8% strongly agree). Six people, which 4 of them belonged to inexperienced group, went for the “neither agree nor disagree” option and 2 people disagreed with this statement.

13. Rate the importance of developing negotiation strategies tailored to the specific context and goals of the negotiation process.

47 responses

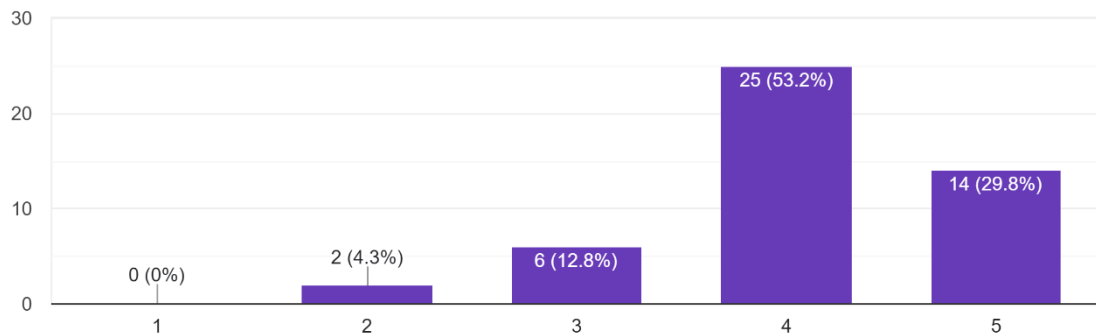


Figure 18. Negotiation strategies tailored to the specific context and goals.

Flexibility and adaptability are important elements of a negotiation process. If someone sticks to one strategy it can lead to lost opportunities, more strife, and less than the best results. The conduct of negotiations is inherently unpredictable and dynamic in nature. Changes in the other person's position, new information, economic or political events happening outside or shifts of power balance are some examples (Lewicki, Barry, & Saunders, 2016). When conditions change, a method that was beneficial in one situation may become useless or even destructive in another. So, being flexible in such approaches allows for necessary modifications that would consider all these factors better. According to Figure 19, a strong diversity of opinions was observed on the 14th Likert question that despite unforeseen events or potential disruptions, you have to keep one strategy during the negotiation process. To be more specific, 15 people agreed with the statement, 12 people disagreed, and 15 remained neutral. Moreover, there were also outliers, as 2 and 3 individuals "strongly disagreed" and "strongly agreed" respectively. It is worth noting that more people from the inexperienced group chose flexibility and adaptability through the negotiation process, as 11 out of 12 people who disagreed with the statement were from this group. On the other hand, most of the experienced negotiators, with more than 4 years of experience, chose to remain neutral (10 people) or agreed with the statement (8 people), showing that they preferred to stick to one strategy.

14. Despite unforeseen events or potential disruptions, you have to keep one strategy during the negotiation process.

47 responses

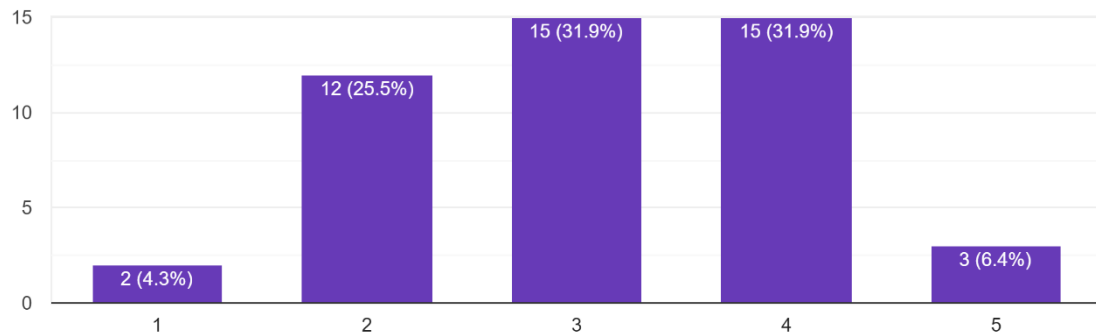


Figure 19. Is it right to keep one strategy during the negotiation process?

It is very beneficial to have a negotiation strategy that ensures both parties get what they want without having to sacrifice too much on either side. This approach concurs with the principles of integrative negotiation which seek mutual gain in finding better ways of providing solutions that will create value. First, integrative negotiation concentrates on understanding the parties' true interests and needs rather than just position bargaining. If negotiators can identify common goals and areas where agreement might be reached then innovative solutions can be worked out that meet everyone's needs. These approaches minimize excessive compromise while encouraging more sustainable deals (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 2011). Lastly, strategies that facilitate win-win relationships are important for building and maintaining positive relations between negotiating units as well as the individuals involved. When each party feels like its objectives are being met there develops trust and cooperation leading to better long-term relationships developed over time. Figure 20 shows that 51.1% of the participants chose to agree that a negotiation strategy that allows both parties to achieve their objectives, without compromising excessively is preferable. Additionally, to the same statement, 23.4% of people strongly agreed, 12.8% remained neutral, 10.6% disagreed and just 2.1% strongly disagreed. Of the 36 participants who agreed or strongly agreed, 29 belonged to the experienced group, meaning they pursued win-win negotiation solutions.

15. I believe that a negotiation strategy that allows both parties to achieve their objectives, without compromising excessively is preferable.

47 responses

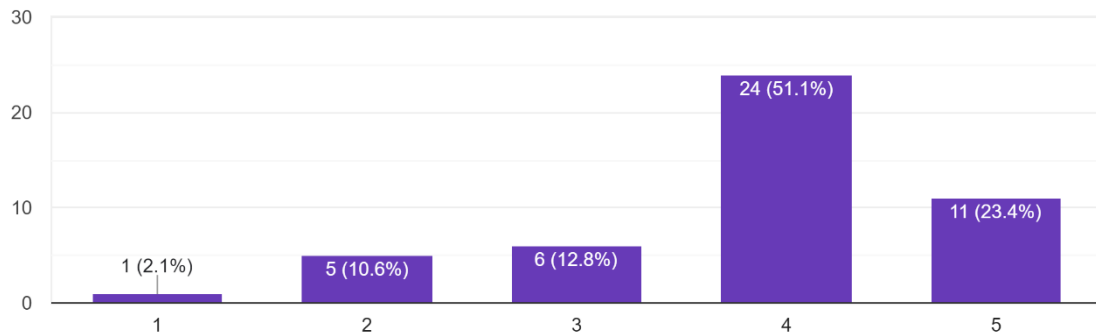


Figure 20. A negotiation strategy that allows both parties to achieve their objectives.

In negotiation, winning above the other party has certain disadvantages which is also known as competitive or distributive approach and is generally preferred less than those that are more collaborative. Short-term gains may be possible with a competitive strategy, but on the other hand this can ruin long-term relationships, decrease the probability of reaching optimal solutions as well as promote adversarial dynamics. This kind of win-lose approach damages the relations and trust between the two parties involved. Negotiations are often not one-time events, thus creating a harmonious working relationship is essential for future interactions. If winning is all that matters during negotiations, then it becomes difficult to have productive outcomes in the future (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 2011). As indicated in Figure 21, most of the participants have the same opinion as the 19.1% and 29.8% of them strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively that a negotiation strategy that focuses on their win against the others is preferable. It was noticeable that 10 out of 16 people aged 35 to 54 years old belonged to that proportion of 48,9% and expressed their disagreement. Yet, 27.7% of the participants didn't express an opinion on the subject, 17% agreed and 6.4% strongly agreed.

16. I believe that a negotiation strategy that focuses on my win against the others is preferable.

47 responses

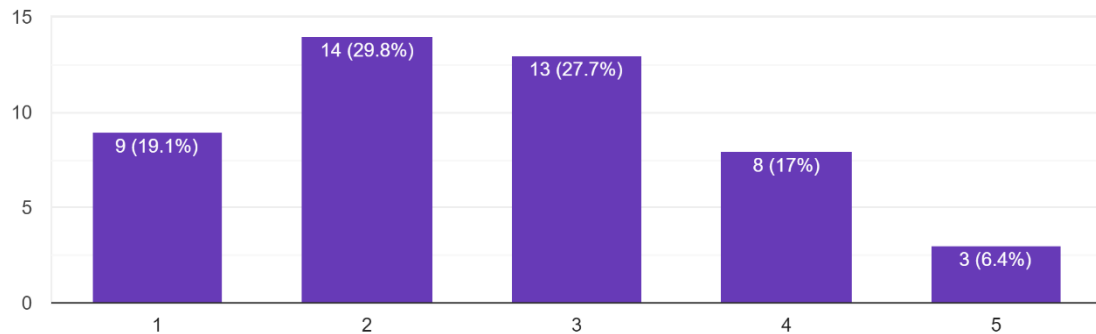


Figure 21. Negotiation strategy that focuses on winning against the others.

6.3 During the Negotiation

This section will present the findings of 21 distinct questions/statements relating to the action-taking phase of the negotiation. The questionnaire part was separated into five inextricably linked subsections, each of which has a vital impact on the outcome: opening stage, exploration stage & information exchange, approaches, policies & tactics during the negotiation, cultural & ethical considerations and post negotiation.

6.3.1 Opening Stage

The most effective negotiators know that it is important to evaluate and develop other alternatives which are known as BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement). BATNA concept highlights that knowledge and improvement on one's alternatives enhances negotiating power and decision-making. Thereby, knowing alternatives gives leverage. Once negotiators know their BATNA, they can reject unfavorable deals more confidently during the negotiation process (Thompson, 2005). These steps can lead to less advantageous agreements or conditions for the negotiators because other options were not considered thus weakening their overall bargaining strength. Secondly, thinking about choices helps in making better decisions. Weighing up the other possibilities enables the negotiators to set more sensible and grounded objectives and realize when it is best to walk away from a negotiation. This can prevent negotiations that are disadvantageous to one party (Bazerman

& Moore, 2012). For instance, if a negotiator realizes that has an acceptable BATNA, they will be more likely to demand improved terms or even abandon an offer that does not meet their bottom-line expectations. On Figure 22, the majority of the participants took into consideration the BATNA, as 24 of them disagreed that the negotiation must be focused on the deal at hand, with no consideration for alternatives and 7 strongly disagreed. The rest 12 and 4 people remained neutral and agreed respectively.

17. The negotiation must be focused on the deal at hand, with no consideration for alternatives.

47 responses

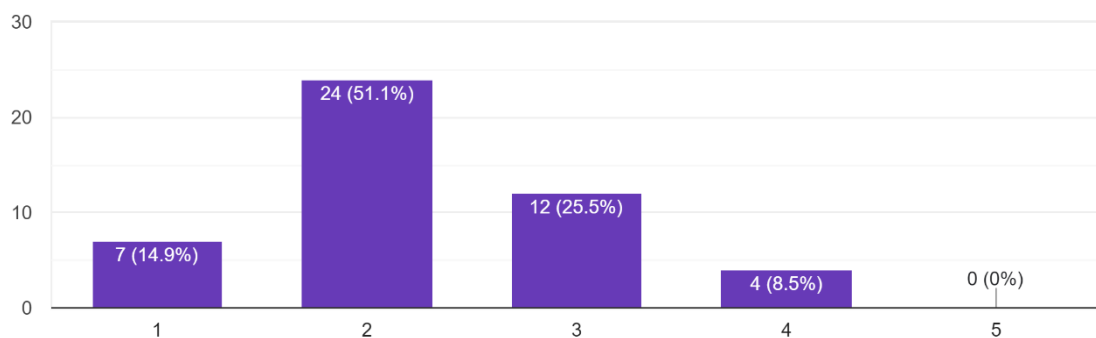


Figure 22. BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement).

Creating a positive atmosphere lays the foundation for a successful negotiation and it is very important at the opening stage. Creating a safe environment that facilitates negotiation is important because it elicits trust, reduces tension and enhances understanding. First impressions through greetings and introductions can help establish rapport with the other party in negotiations thus building trust between them. Trust is an essential factor during negotiations as it promotes an open avenue for communication to take place which would pave the way for sharing of information to reach agreement (Lewicki, Barry & Saunders, 2016). When negotiators trust each other, they are more likely to disclose their true interests and constraints, paving the way for integrative solutions. Moreover, casual conversations and small talk can help reduce tension and create a more relaxed atmosphere. Negotiations can be stressful at times and beginning with informal interactions may alleviate anxiety among parties leading to more cooperation. As depicted in Figure 23, 46.8% and 31.9% of the individuals agreed and strongly agreed respectively that establishing a positive atmosphere through greetings, introductions, and casual conversations influences the

negotiation process positively. The remaining 21.3% of the participants neither agree nor disagree, with 6/10 people detected in the younger age category of under 34.

18. Establishing a positive atmosphere through greetings, introductions, and casual conversations influences the negotiation process positively.

47 responses

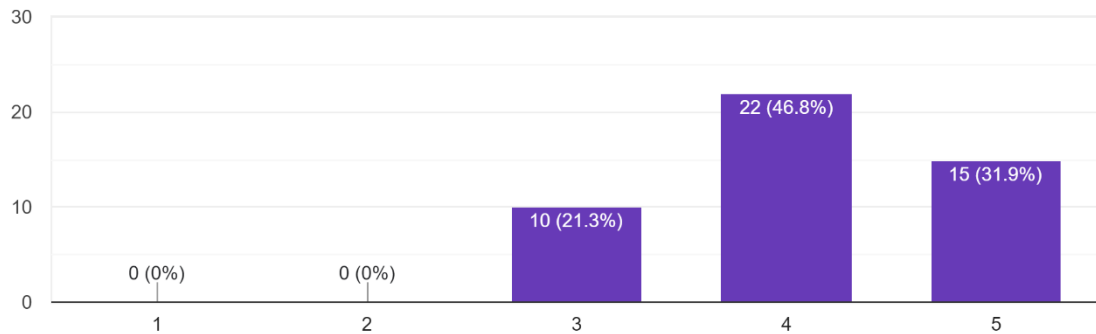


Figure 23. Positive atmosphere through negotiation.

In the opening stage of negotiation, it is generally unwise to value the importance of having the upper hand in negotiation over creating a positive environment. This will likely result in increased tension, mistrust, and adversarial relationships which are not helpful in achieving optimal negotiation outcomes. In negotiations carried out on a positive note as well as with the building of rapport, the early stages' contribution towards a successful outcome is significant. For this reason, an atmosphere that values collaboration and promotes the spirit of openness between negotiators might just be the best place to start (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 2011). If there is no positive environment for discussing a deal, it may lead to hostility and compromises that don't benefit both parties. Figure 24 shows that most of the participants believe that it is important to develop a positive environment, in the opening stage of negotiation, instead of showing that you have the upper hand. To be more specific, 29.8% of the individuals strongly disagreed and 36.2% disagreed with this statement. On the other hand, 27.7% of the participants chose to remain neutral, of which 8 of them were from the experienced group, 2.1% agreed and 4.3% strongly agreed.

19. In the opening stage of negotiation, it is important to show that I have the upper hand and not to develop a positive environment.

47 responses

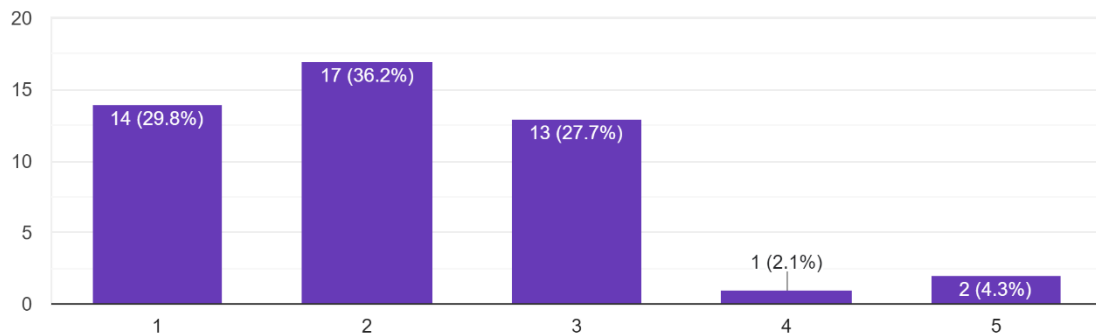


Figure 24. Upper hand or positive environment?

6.3.2 Exploration Stage and Information Exchange

Exploration and information exchange is a vital stage of every negotiation, as the intentions of each side are revealed. Negotiation success depends on understanding the needs of both parties involved. Understanding the requirements of all parties is an important tenet of effective negotiation as it aids in making contracts that are beneficial to everyone involved. Firstly, knowing your side's needs will enable you to prioritize them and set boundaries. Otherwise, concessions can easily be made that go against the interests of the team or conditions can be imposed that exclude some of the team's most cherished goals. Second, it is critical to understand what the opponent hopes to achieve from the discussions. When there is knowledge of what matters to them and their limitations it becomes easier to find common ground or trade off benefits. This information gives an insight into possible solutions that benefit both sides hence improving chances for satisfactory agreements (Lewicki, Barry, & Saunders, 2016). As Figure 25 indicates, the above theory finds most of the candidates in agreement, as 20 and 11 of the “agreed” and “strongly agreed” respectively that they would comprehend their own and their counterpart's requirements during the negotiation process. Thirteen were the participants that remained neutral, while 1 and 2 people strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively.

20. I would comprehend my own and my counterpart's requirements during the negotiation process.

47 responses

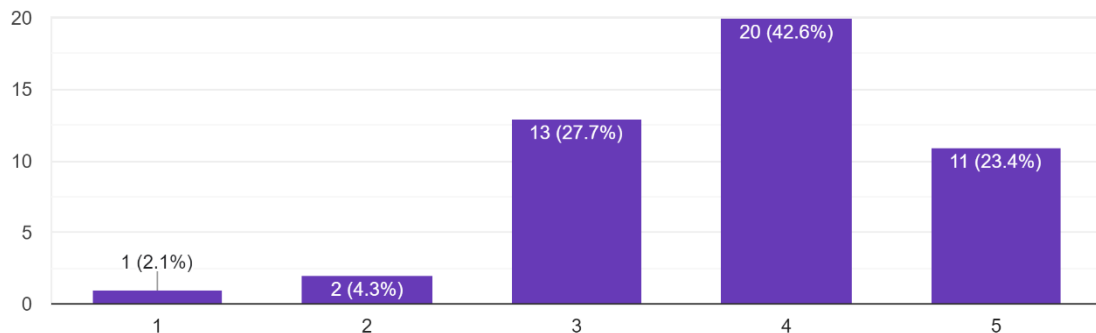


Figure 25. Requirements during the negotiation process.

Negotiation strategies that use active listening and empathy are a highly effective approach to achieve better results. Improved understanding, trust, and collaboration are some of the reasons why active listening and empathy are required in negotiation processes. Active listening involves fully concentrating on the speaker, understanding their message, responding thoughtfully, and remembering what was said. It is useful in negotiations to ensure that one has a clear understanding of the other party's interests, concerns, and priorities. It also assists in avoiding misunderstandings leading to more precise responses that can be understood properly (Thompson 2015). In addition, empathy, which consists of acknowledging and experiencing another person's emotions, has a significant role to play in negotiation. Demonstrating empathy helps negotiators to grasp the emotional backdrop as well as root causes for the stances taken by the other party. Consequently, this increased understanding can result in more inventive outcomes that meet both their interests. Most of the participants would employ active listening and empathy in their communication during the negotiation, as there were 19 that agreed and 19 that strongly agreed with this statement. Moreover, 7 people neither agreed nor disagreed, while 2 people disagreed. These results are depicted in Figure 26.

21. I would employ active listening and empathy in my communication during the negotiation.

47 responses

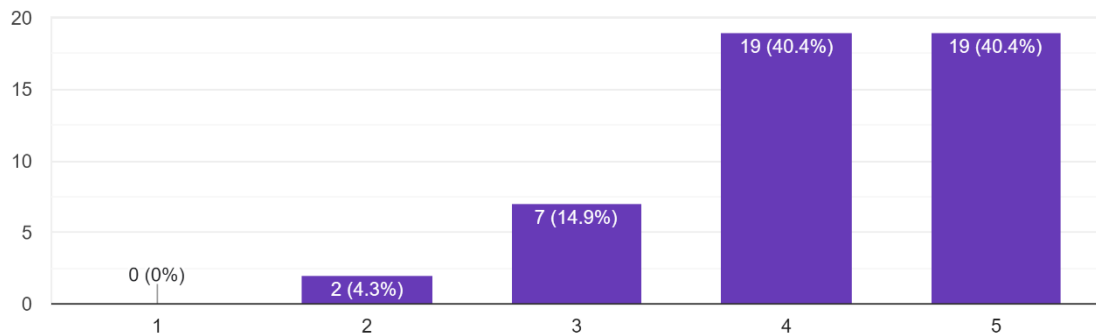


Figure 26. Active listening & empathy.

An effective strategy is communication with transparency in order to create understanding and collaboration throughout negotiations. Trusting each other, reducing misunderstanding, and improving collaborative atmosphere are the benefits of communicating transparently. The first thing that transparency does is build trust between parties involved in negotiations. Negotiators who are open and truthful about their intentions, constraints, or goals generate a basis for collaboration based on trust that is key for any teamwork effort. Trust enables more open communication as well as information sharing which are necessary for discovering common interests and devising integrative solutions (Lewicki, Barry & Saunders 2016). Lack of transparency results in suspicions among parties which can cause defensive behavior and hostility. Figure 27 shows that 53.2% of the individuals chose to agree that it is right to communicate with transparency to promote understanding and collaboration during negotiations and 23.4% of them strongly agreed. Additionally, 12.8% of the participants remained neutral and 10.6% of them disagreed. It was noticed that 20 out of 24 inexperienced individuals agreed or strongly agreed, thus showing their belief that transparency could lead to better negotiation results.

22. It is right to communicate with transparency to promote understanding and collaboration during negotiations.

47 responses

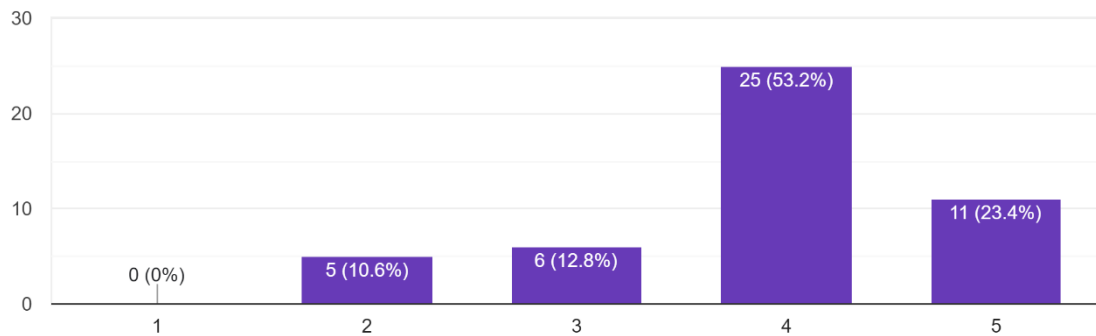


Figure 27. Transparency during negotiations.

Negotiations are not completely fruitful without the transfer of information from one party to another. The exchange of information helps to reveal opportunities for mutual gain, build trust, and clarify interests. The first benefit that accrues from sharing such data is that parties get to understand each other's interests and priorities better. This can be made possible when negotiators openly communicate their needs and constraints, thereby enabling both sides to see the things they agree on and what needs further discussion. To address this issue, it is crucial to develop integrative solutions that will satisfy the needs of all parties (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 2011). This is because if negotiators do not have enough information, they might have wrong assumptions or only partial knowledge which would make their agreement suboptimal. Figure 28 illustrates that 40.4% and 8.5% of the participants agreed and strongly agreed respectively that they would probably exchange information with their counterparts during negotiations. However, a big proportion, 34% of the participants, did not agree nor disagree, of which 9 out of 16 were from the group with negotiation experience under 4 years. Finally, 12.8% and 4.3% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively.

23. I would probably exchange information with my counterparts during negotiations.

47 responses

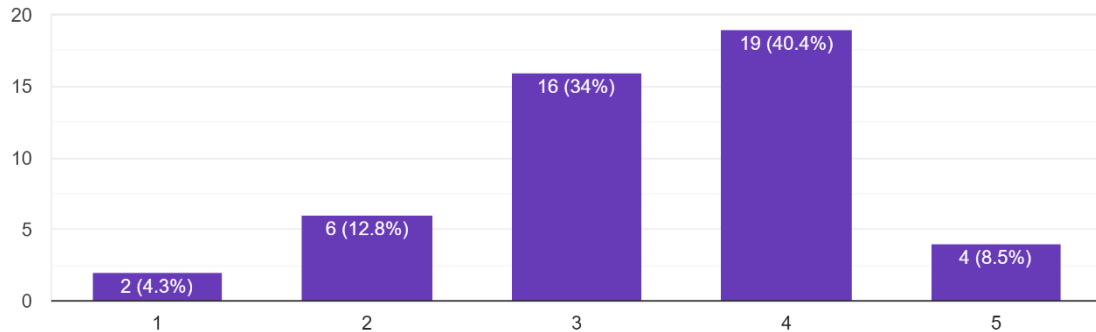


Figure 28. Information exchange.

Delving deeper into issues, asking open-ended questions, and showing empathy are crucial in the exploration stage of negotiation. These practices enhance understanding, build trust, and foster collaboration. Delving into issues brings out people's interest hence finding integrative solutions (Fisher, Ury & Patton, 2011). Open-ended questions collect more details from the other party thus facilitating dialogue. Showing empathy towards others' views and ideas is essential as it builds trust in negotiation by reducing defensive mode that might arise among parties involved (Lewicki, Barry & Saunders, 2016). The research argues that employing such strategies improves negotiated outcomes by promoting perspective-taking and dealing with the root causes of disagreements (Galinsky, Maddux, Gilin & White, 2008). As Figure 29 shows, 24 and 5 people agreed and strongly agreed respectively that delving deeper into issues, asking open-ended questions, and showing empathy are crucial in the exploration stage of negotiation. There were 14 people, 11 of whom were inexperienced, who went neutral to this statement. On the other hand, there was a minority that disagreed, as 3 people disagreed and 1 person strongly disagreed.

24. To what extent do you believe delving deeper into issues, asking open-ended questions, and showing empathy are crucial in the exploration stage of negotiation?

47 responses

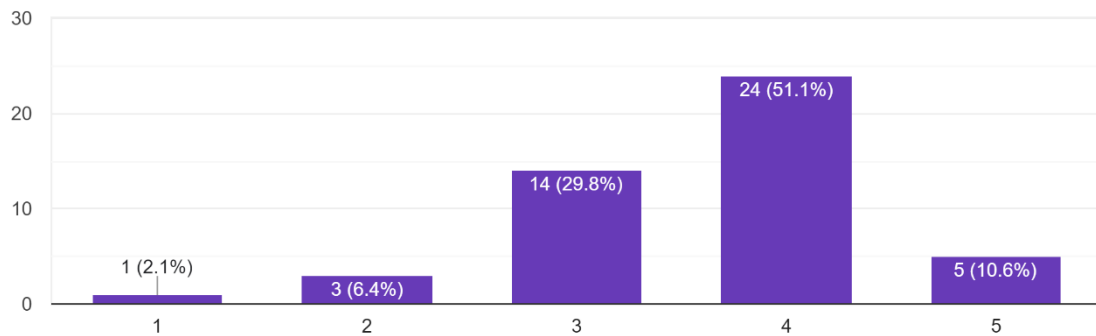


Figure 29. Delving deeper into issues.

6.3.3 Approaches, Policies and Tactics during the Negotiation

Another key factors that play a crucial role are the approaches, policies and tactics that are chosen to be applied depending on the occasion and the environment of each negotiation. Firstly, building trust and relationships with counterparts is critically important during negotiations. This is because trust is the foundation of excellent communication, where people can convey their actual interests and requirements to other parties (Lewicki, Barry, & Saunders, 2016). It leads to sharing of information in an open manner that reduces the chances of miscommunication or misunderstanding (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 2011). Furthermore, it helps establish strong relationships based on trust hence fostering collaboration rather than competition as well as adversarial negotiations. Through this collaboration they will develop agreements through creative problem solving that provides integrative agreements meeting all parties' interests. As indicated in Figure 30, the statement "Building trust and relationships with counterparts is very important for me during the negotiation" finds in agreement 93.6% of the sample population, as 46.8% agreed and again 46.8% strongly agreed. Two people (4.3%) chose to remain neutral and only 1 person (2.1%) disagreed.

25. Building trust and relationships with counterparts is very important for me during the negotiation.

47 responses

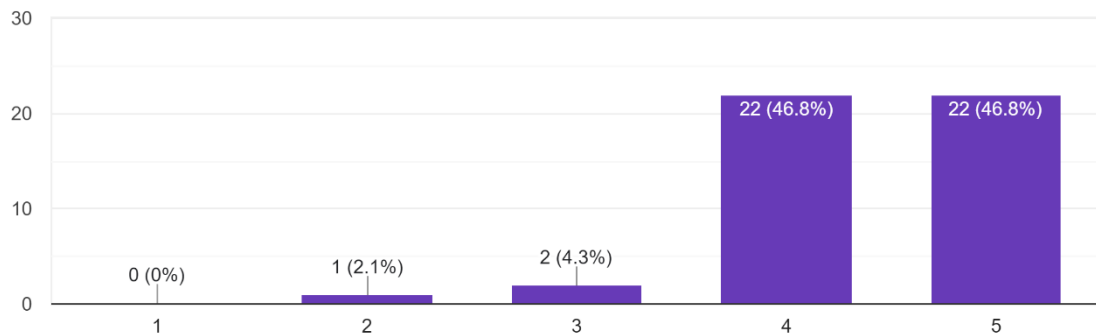


Figure 30. Building trust and relationships.

To get successful outcomes, managing emotions and empathy in negotiations are vital practices. For decision-making to be effective and problem solving useful, negotiators must be serene, focused, and clear-headed (Thompson, 2015). Negotiators who manage their emotions are less likely to respond with aggression or impulse thus reducing the risk of conflict and encouraging a constructive negotiation environment (Lewicki, Barry, & Saunders, 2016). The term empathy refers to the ability of an individual to understand and accept the feelings as well as viewpoints of another person or party involved in a negotiation. This is because through empathy it helps build rapport that builds trust making it easier for both parties to find solutions together (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 2011). Through empathizing negotiators show sincere concern about the other side's issues which makes them communicate more openly and honestly. Figure 31 shows that 25 and 12 participants agreed and strongly agreed respectively that it is right to manage your emotions and display empathy in negotiations. Eight people, 6 of whom were inexperienced, were neutral to this statement and only 2 inexperienced individuals disagreed.

26. It is right to manage my emotions and display empathy in negotiations.

47 responses

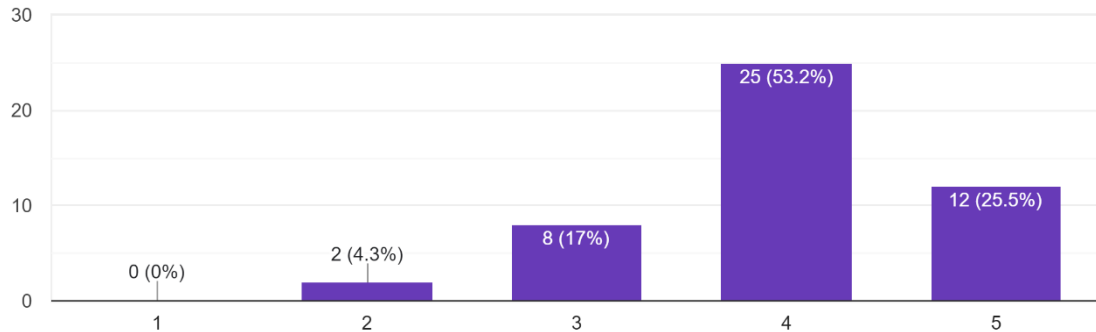


Figure 31. Managing emotions during negotiations.

Focusing solely on one's own goals without considering the other party's interests is generally not an effective negotiation strategy. This in turn leads to adversarial negotiations, more conflicts and less satisfactory outcomes. Negotiation often involves finding answers that benefit all participants to the agreement hence it is necessary for negotiators to appreciate and address the issues concerning each person involved in the process (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 2011). Research shows that integrative negotiation which seeks to create value as well as meet both parties' interests results in longer lasting and more satisfactory solutions than does distributive negotiation that purely aims at dividing existing resources (Thompson, 2015). From Figure 32 it is noted that 21 and 12 participants strongly disagreed and disagreed that they are not concerned about the other party's interests and they just need to pursue their goals. In this question both the experienced and the inexperienced were confident about their answer as most of them showed their intense disagreement about the question. Finally, there were 10 people who neither agreed or disagreed, 3 who agreed and 1 who strongly agreed.

27. I am not concerned about the other party's interests. I just need to pursue my goals.

47 responses

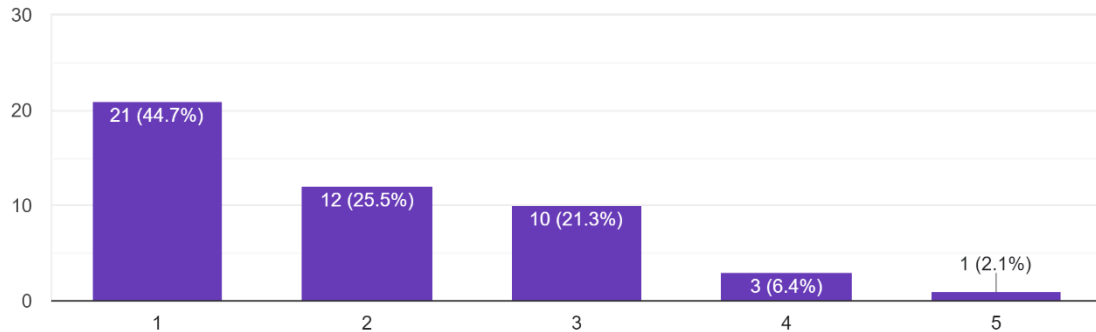


Figure 32. Ours and our counterparts' interests.

When a deadlock arises in negotiations, attempting to squeeze the opposing side for greater outcomes is generally not an effective strategy. This approach can compound acrimony, harm relationships, and make communications collapse entirely (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 2011). Deadlocks usually imply entrenched positions, as pressurizing the other party can therefore only serve to make them more defensive and reluctant to compromise. On the other hand, it is possible to adopt an alternative course of action that involves problem-solving methods to solve the deadlock. These include delving into underlying interests, creating new alternatives as well as expanding options rather than dividing them (Thompson, 2015). By looking at mutual gains and understanding what has caused the deadlock negotiators to come up with fresh ideas that would satisfy both parties' interests. As seen in Figure 33 most of the participants (46.8%) remained neutral that when a deadlock arises, it is a good moment to squeeze the opposing side more to get greater outcomes. Their answer showed a big dispersion, as 7 and 7 people strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively and 11 people agreed. Of the 11 people who agreed the 8 were from the experienced group, showing that they may press their counterparts to the limit when a deadlock comes.

28. When a deadlock arises, it is a good moment to squeeze the opposing side more to get greater outcomes.

47 responses

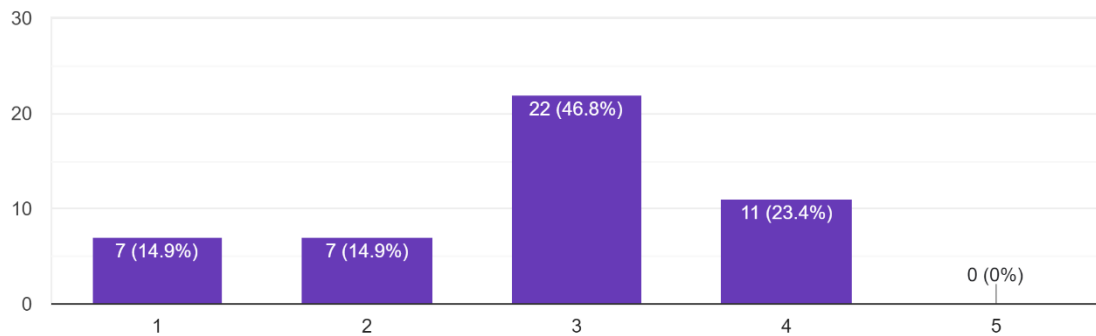


Figure 33. When a deadlock arises.

Flexibility in problem-solving strategies is indeed crucial for successful negotiation outcomes. Negotiations are often multi-faceted and constantly changing dynamics make it important that negotiators adjust their plans accordingly (Thompson, 2015). With this, negotiators can effectively react to new data, changed priorities or unanticipated obstacles, which means they possess better creative abilities and find the best solutions. In addition, flexibility in problem-solving nurtures a spirit of collaborative negotiations. The readiness of negotiators to modify their tactics and consider alternative remedies signals cooperation and joint solution-seeking (Fisher, Ury & Patton 2011). This way trust is earned between parties, enabling them easily to reach lasting and satisfactory agreement. As Figure 34 indicates, the level of agreement on the sentence "Flexibility in problem-solving strategies is crucial for successful negotiation outcomes" was big as 42.6% of the participants agreed and 40.4% of them strongly agreed. In addition, 17% of the participants neither agreed nor disagreed.

29. Please indicate your level of agreement with the statement: "Flexibility in problem-solving strategies is crucial for successful negotiation outcomes."

47 responses

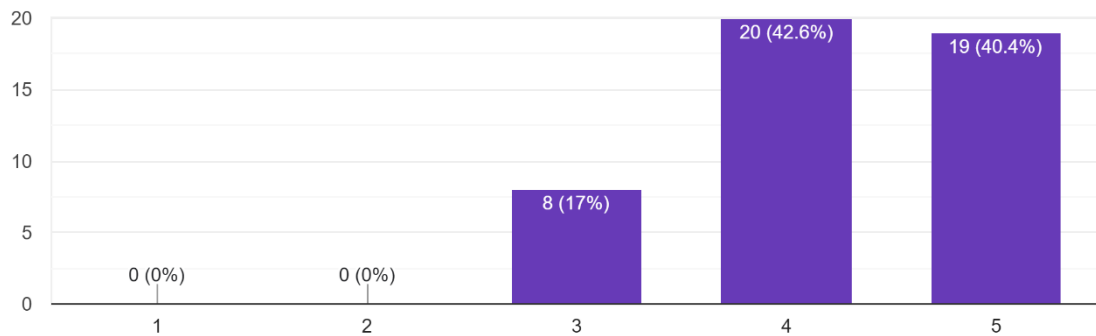


Figure 34. "Flexibility in problem-solving strategies is crucial for successful negotiation outcomes".

A good practice to embrace during negotiations is checking the counterparts' understanding as it ensures clarity, maintains control, and offers a polite way to address disagreements. Misunderstandings might lead to conflicts and slow down progress, as clearness is important (Thompson, 2015). By checking how well they understand what has been said, the negotiators could ensure that both parties in a negotiation are communicating about the same terms as far as agreements are concerned so that possibilities of miscommunication do not arise. In negotiations control is desirable and checking understanding helps keep negotiators informed on the other party's point of view thus enabling them to guide conversations effectively (Lewicki, Barry, & Saunders, 2016). It allows negotiators to address any ambiguities right away and keep discussions focused on key concerns. Figure 35 depicts that the majority of the participants agreed that checking their understanding is a good policy as clarity is ensured, control is maintained, and it is a polite way to disagree with something, as 30 of them agreed with that, and 8 strongly agreed, while 9 participants chose to remain neutral.

30. Checking their understanding is a good policy as clarity is ensured, control is maintained, and it is a polite way to disagree with something.

47 responses

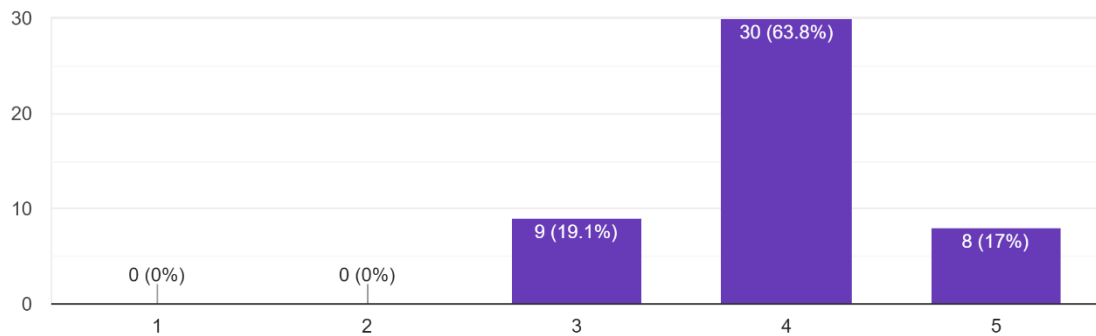


Figure 35. Checking the understanding.

Is it considered a big loss if you make concessions during bargaining? As Figure 36 demonstrates, 20 participants neither agreed nor disagreed, 19 and 2 people disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively, while 4 and 2 people agreed and strongly agreed respectively. Of the 20 participants who remained neutral, 14 were 34 years old or under. But what is right about concessions? Concessions in strategic use can facilitate progress and mutually beneficial consequences rather than mere losses (Fisher, Ury & Patton, 2011). Integrative negotiation theory that emphasizes collaboration stipulates that concessions are just that give-and-take process which makes it possible to create value for both parties. Through making concessions negotiators demonstrate flexibility and goodwill, two ingredients necessary for trust building and relationship strengthening (Lewicki, Barry & Saunders, 2016). This trust can, in turn, lead to more favorable outcomes in both the current negotiation and future interactions. Similarly, reciprocal concessions concept is critical during successful negotiations. For instance, when one party concedes on an issue it often forces the other party to do so leading to a more cooperative and productive negotiation process (Thompson, 2012). Consequently, this dynamic nature of negotiation can result in agreements that will make all satisfied and sustainable over time.

31. To what extent do you agree with this statement: It is considered a big loss if you make concessions during bargaining.

47 responses

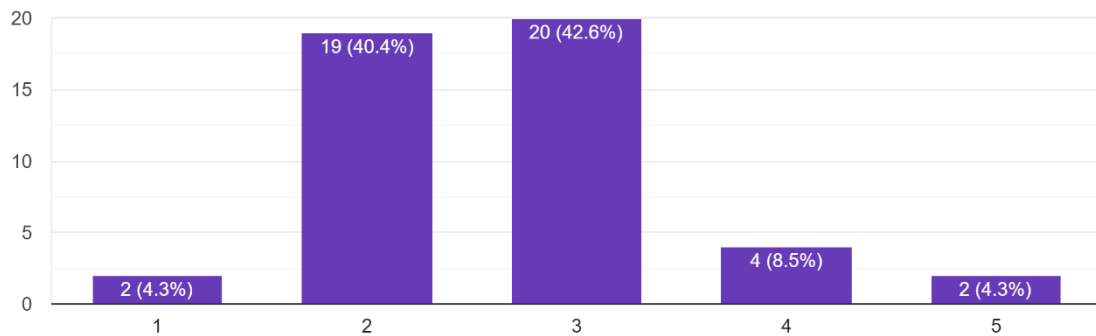


Figure 36. Concessions during negotiation.

Finally, favorable outcomes in negotiation can be achieved by employing various negotiation tactics. Negotiation tactics are strategic instruments that assist negotiators to effectively influence the direction and results of communications. Early price “anchoring” may, for instance, involves setting the initial price or terms in a negotiation, that shapes the other party’s expectations as well as concessions (Galinsky & Mussweiler, 2001). Figure 37 shows that 46.8% and 8.5% of our sample agreed and strongly agreed respectively that various negotiation tactics (e.g. early price anchoring) in achieving favorable outcomes during bargaining are crucial. In addition, 36.2% of the participants had a neutral attitude on this question and 8.5% of them disagreed.

32. Do you agree that various negotiation tactics (e.g. early price anchoring) in achieving favorable outcomes during bargaining are crucial?

47 responses

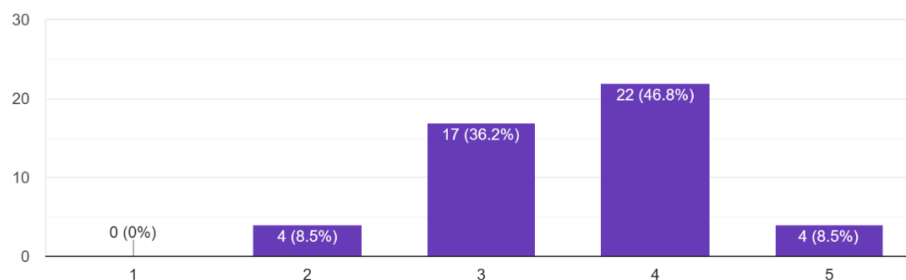


Figure 37. Negotiation tactics.

6.3.4 Cultural and Ethical Considerations

Cultural differences influence communication styles, decision-making processes, and attitudes toward conflict and cooperation, which can profoundly shape negotiation dynamics (Brett, 2001). For instance, negotiators from individualist cultures like the United States may put personal goals at the forefront while using a direct form of communication as opposed to those from collectivist cultures like Japan who emphasize group harmony by using indirect communication (Hofstede, 2001). Effective negotiators should be able to recognize these cultural subtleties to adapt their strategies to fill the void between them and create trust among each other, as cultural differences can lead to misunderstandings and misinterpretations if not properly managed (Gelfand, Brett & Gunia, 2011). As indicated to Figure 38, 10 and 15 people disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively that cultural and contextual differences will not affect the negotiation. Furthermore, 11 people chose to remain neutral and 9 and 2 people agreed and strongly agreed respectively.

33. Cultural and contextual differences will not affect the negotiation.
47 responses

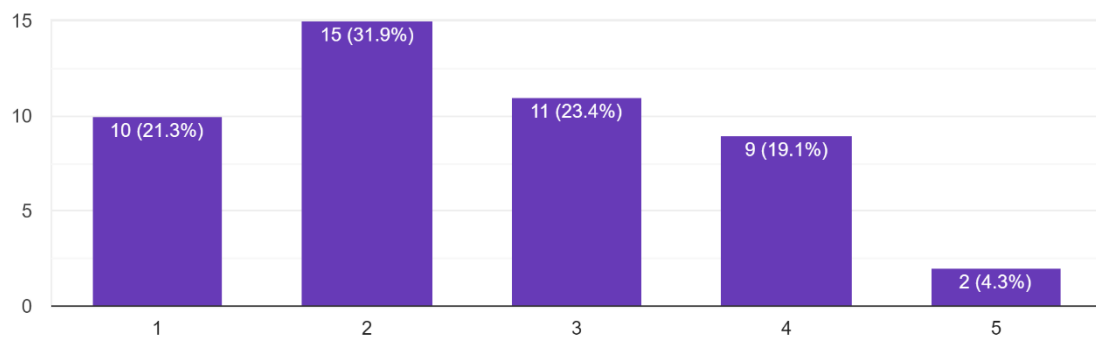


Figure 38. Cultural and contextual differences.

Moreover, cross-cultural negotiation scenarios benefit greatly from cultural intelligence (CQ). It includes the capacity to recognize cultural distinctions, modify communication patterns and develop trust which are vital for successful cross-cultural interactions (Earley & Ang, 2003). Knowing cultural disparities is what CQ is all about. CQ enables negotiators to decode the actions, values and ways of communicating in a more accurate way of their counterparts who are drawn from different ethnic backgrounds (Thomas et al., 2008). This

prevents misunderstandings and enhances communication as negotiators can predict culturally influenced conducts and expectations thus responding accordingly (Ang, Van Dyne, & Koh, 2006). Figure 39 describes the level of agreement on the statement that cultural intelligence (CQ) is very valuable in navigating cross-cultural negotiation scenarios, including understanding cultural differences, adjusting communication styles, and building trust. In detail, 34 participants agreed with this statement, 11 strongly agreed, while only 2 people neither agreed nor disagreed.

34. Cultural intelligence (CQ) is very valuable in navigating cross-cultural negotiation scenarios, including understanding cultural differences, adjusting communication styles, and building trust.
47 responses

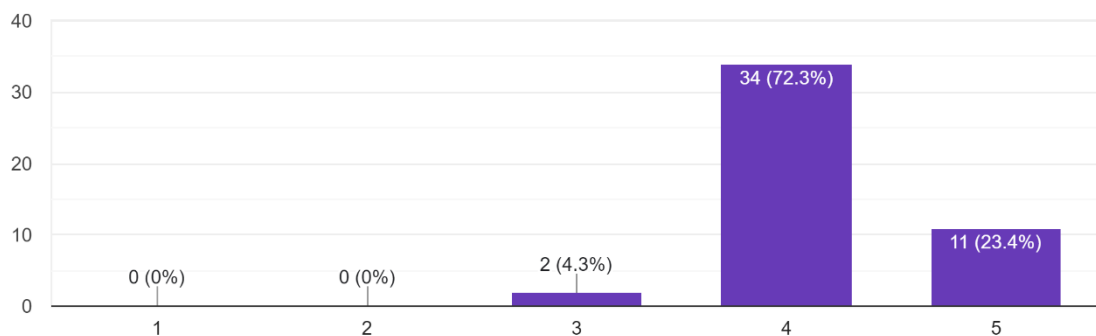


Figure 39. Cultural intelligence (CQ).

Finally, honesty, equity and transparent communications are ethical considerations vital for any negotiation process. They help to create trust, ensure fairness and promote transparent communication that are important for successful and sustainable outcomes of negotiations (Lewicki, Barry, & Saunders, 2016). Figure 42 shows that 40.4% of the participants strongly disagreed that ethical considerations, like honesty, equity, and transparent communication don't play an important role in the negotiation process and 36.2% disagreed. Moreover, 10.6% of the participants remained neutral, while 10.6% and 2.1% agreed and strongly agreed respectively. It was noticed that most of the inexperienced participants seemed to agree more, as 20 of the total 36 people who agreed or strongly agreed were from the inexperienced group, with less than 4 years of negotiating experience.

35. Ethical considerations, like honesty, equity, and transparent communication don't play an important role in the negotiation process.

47 responses

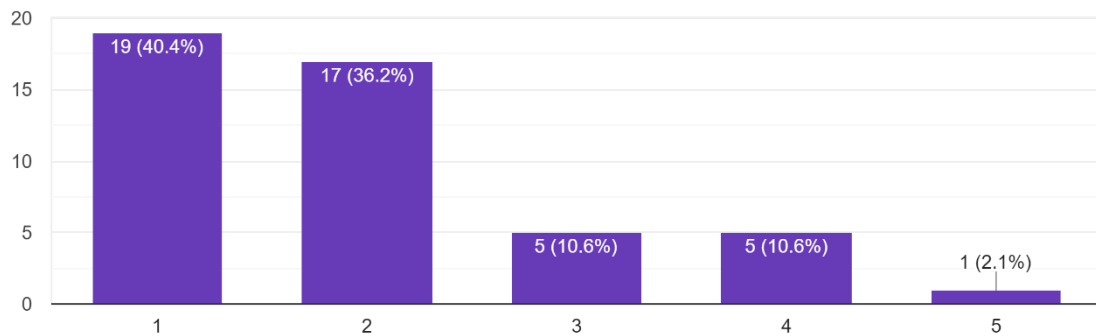


Figure 40. Ethical considerations.

6.3.5 Post Negotiation

The importance of securing agreements that all parties taking part in the negotiation process are satisfied with before closing the deal is highly significant. The durability and success of this agreement depends on satisfaction amongst all sides, which promotes trust and positive relationships (Thompson, 2015). When parties believe their interests have been appropriately treated, they are more inclined to comply with the agreement and participate in future negotiations, . (Lewicki, Barry, & Saunders, 2016). Also, it ensures mutual satisfaction and avoids future conflicts and renegotiations which can lead to a more stable and cooperative relationship (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 2011). As shown in Figure 41, most of the people tend to agree that it is important to ensure that all parties involved in the negotiation feel satisfied with the terms of the deal before closing, as 46.8% and 31.9% of them agreed and strongly agreed respectively. In addition, 14.9% remained neutral and 6.4% disagreed.

Effective negotiation is not just about reaching an agreement; it also involves making sure its terms are implemented and that the outcomes are evaluated. Following up on its implementation ensures conformity and resolving any problems that may come up, thus maintaining the validity of the treaty (Lewicki, Barry, & Saunders, 2016). Furthermore, overseeing the execution process of the pact helps to ascertain whether both sides are living up to their words thereby promoting trustworthiness and minimization of wrangles between

them (Thompson 2012). Also, assessing the outcome permits judging how successful the contract has been to discover points for betterment in future negotiations (Bazerman & Moore 2012). Figure 42 shows that most of the participants (20 people) strongly disagreed that it is not their job to oversee whether the agreement terms are implemented or to review and evaluate the results, and 12 disagreed. Furthermore, 10 people neither agreed nor disagreed, of whom 7 were from the experienced group of negotiators, and 5 participants agreed.

36. Rate the importance of ensuring that all parties involved in the negotiation feel satisfied with the terms of the deal before closing.

47 responses

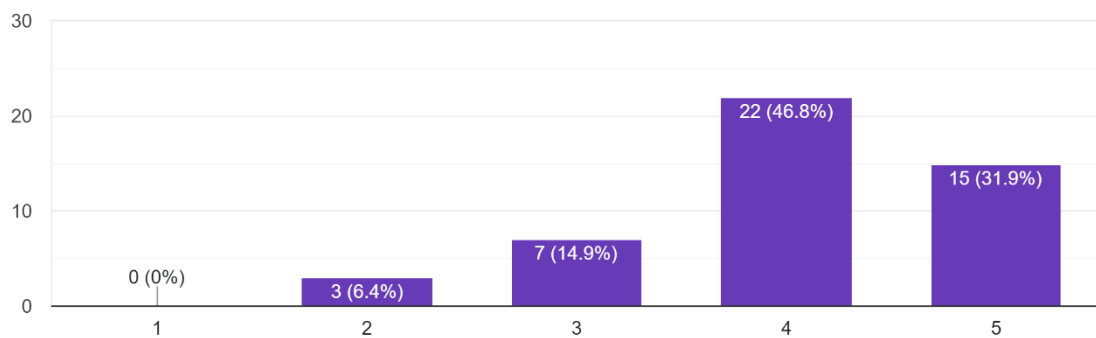


Figure 41. Satisfaction with the terms of the deal.

37. It is not my job to oversee whether the agreement terms are implemented or to review and evaluate the results.

47 responses

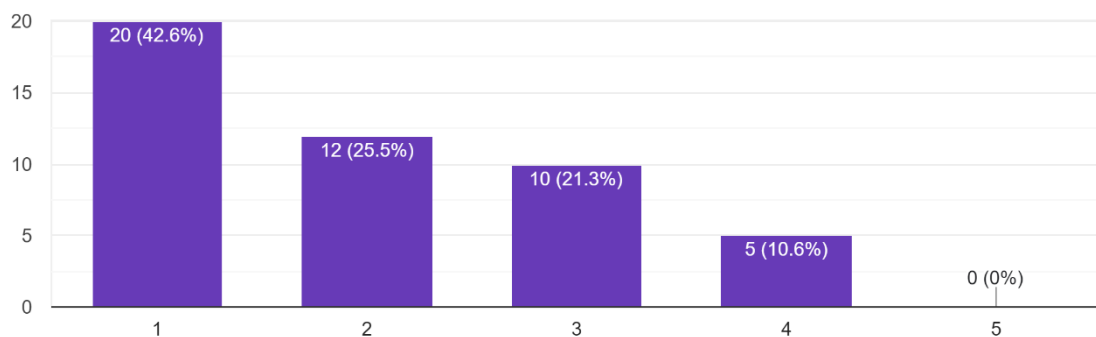


Figure 42. Agreement terms: Are they implemented?

7. Conclusion

This dissertation has explored the multifaceted and intricate nature of negotiation, highlighting the must-know strategies, skills, and approaches that are crucial for a winning outcome. The research has given a comprehensive review of all vital issues in negotiation through both theoretical exploration and empirical analysis.

An important finding from this study is that thorough preparation and strategic planning are necessary. This means that successful negotiators need to spend their time investigating, setting goals clearly as well as understanding every party's stake involved. This entails spending time investigating all relevant information, clearly setting objectives, and appreciating the stakes and interests of each party involved. Being effectively prepared allows negotiators to come to talks with a clear-cut strategy, making them better equipped to deal with the intricacies and dynamics of negotiations.

The participants that took part on the survey were exclusively from Greece and they gave us insights into how negotiations are viewed and managed in the country. The majority (59.6%) were aged between 25-34 years and 48.9% were experienced in negotiations, meaning they had more than 4 years of negotiating experience. Finally, most (95.7%) of them are employed presently and come from different professional areas, with notable numbers from engineering, commercial, and purchasing.

To begin with, preparatory behaviors and strategies of the participants before negotiations were determined by the survey. Key findings revealed that highly value gathering information and understanding what their counterparts need. In general, this involves learning all about another party's background, interests, and objectives that help in predicting their requirements and responding to them as required. The study identified effective team planning and setting clear objectives as critical steps. Thereby, teams would discuss different negotiation scenarios and potential results, ensuring that all members agree with their common goals and strategies. Additionally, results indicated that they evaluate possible hazards, trade-offs analysis or any alternative backup plans. This included setting clear priorities and determining the limits of concessions, to guide decision-making during the negotiation.

Secondly, during negotiations, the participants considered active listening skills and empathy to be important. Active listening involves paying keen attention to what the other

party is saying and asking questions for clarification to know their standpoint. The survey also indicated that negotiators would also use empathy to view issues from the other party's perspective, thereby creating a more cooperative atmosphere. Transparency and effective information sharing are also believed to be important for significant outcomes. Moreover, it was a common belief that sharing relevant information and being truthful about constraints and intentions, builds trust between parties. Building trust and managing emotions featured highly among recommendations by participants that would ensure positive negotiation dynamics are maintained. Finally, they noted the need to manage their emotions in a right manner, even when confronted with difficult situations or tough strategies from the other side.

Among the survey participants, a significant discovery made was their unanimous endorsement of integrative and collaborative methods. The respondents all preferred these methods whether they had many years of experience or not and stressed the need to create value and find mutually satisfactory solutions. It is important to note that among the negotiation styles discussed, integrative negotiation attracted more attention due to its emphasis on comprehending everyone's interest as well as searching for win-win outcomes.

The move towards collaborative tactics reveals a shift from the traditional adversarial negotiation approaches to more cooperative ones that focus on relationships. As such, participants acknowledged that by jointly working towards an agreement, exchanging information and fostering bonds built on trust, they were able to reach much better agreements in terms of sustainability and satisfaction. This supports the prevailing inclination in negotiation theory which has put forward collaboration as a way of improving results and maintaining good association between parties involved. Of course, there are other negotiating methods and tactics that only focus on win-lose outcomes, but depending on the participants, the collaborative approach was preferable.

To conclude, this study helps to expand negotiation research by providing practical guidance for beginners and experts in this field. By emphasizing the importance of preparation, keeping attention to key factors during the negotiation and understanding the counterparts' point of view, any negotiator may obtain favorable results.

References

- Ang, S., Van Dyne, L., & Koh, C. (2006). Personality correlates of the four-factor model of cultural intelligence. *Group & Organization Management*, 31(1), 100-123.
- Axelrod, R. (1984). *The evolution of cooperation*. Basic Books.
- Babbie, E. (2016). *"The Basics of Social Research"* (7th ed.). Cengage Learning.
- Baron, J. B. (1994). *Thinking and deciding* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- Bazerman, M. H. (1983). Negotiator judgment: A critical look at the rationality assumption. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 27(2), 193–211.
- Bazerman, M. H., & Moore, D. A. (2012). *Judgment in managerial decision making* (8th ed.). Wiley.
- Blau, P. M. (1964). *Exchange and power in social life*. Wiley.
- Brett, J. M. (2001). *Negotiating globally: How to negotiate deals, resolve disputes, and make decisions across cultural boundaries*. Jossey-Bass.
- Cohen, H. (2014). *You can negotiate anything*. Bantam.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.
- Cunningham, J. (2019). Career Development Over the Lifespan: Implications for Policy and Practice. *Journal of Career Development*, 46(4), 432-448.

De Dreu, C. K., & van de Vliert, E. (1997). Using judgment heuristics to improve negotiation and decision making: The effects of underconfidence, availability, anchoring, and vividness on negotiation behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 69(2), 117–127.

Drexler, O. (2022). How to Use Likert Scales for Your eCommerce. Available at: <https://www.123formbuilder.com/blog/how-to-use-likert-scales> (Accessed April 26, 2024)

Earley, P. C., & Ang, S. (2003). *Cultural intelligence: Individual interactions across cultures*. Stanford University Press.

Fisher, R., & Shapiro, D. (2005). *Beyond winning: Negotiating to create value in deals and disputes*. Harvard University Press.

Fisher, R., Ury, W., & Patton, B. (2011). *Getting to yes: Negotiating agreement without giving in*. Penguin.

Galinsky, A. D., & Mussweiler, T. (2001). First offers as anchors: The role of perspective-taking and negotiator focus. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 81(4), 657-669.

Galinsky, A. D., Maddux, W. W., Gilin, D., & White, J. B. (2008). Why it pays to get inside the head of your opponent: The differential effects of perspective-taking and empathy in negotiations. *Psychological Science*, 19(4), 378-384.

Gelfand, M. J., Brett, J. M., & Gunia, B. C. (2011). *Handbook of negotiation and culture*. Stanford University Press.

Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. Bantam Books.

Hackman, J. R. (2002). *Leading teams: Setting the stage for great performances*. Harvard Business School Press.

Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions, and organizations across nations* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.

Holodny, E. (2018, Jan 4). An Ivy League professor explains chaos theory, the prisoner's dilemma, and why math isn't really boring. Retrieved from Business Insider: <https://www.businessinsider.com/steven-strogatz-interview-on-math-education-2016-6> (Accessed March 27, 2024)

Homans, G. C. (1958). Social behavior as exchange. *American Journal of Sociology*, 63(6), 597–606.

Jamieson, S. (2004). Likert scales: How to (ab)use them. *Medical Education*, 38(12), 1217–1218.

Kreps, D. M. (1990). *Game theory and economic modelling*. Oxford University Press.

Krosnick, J. A., & Fabrigar, L. R. (1997). Designing rating scales for effective measurement in surveys. In L. Lyberg, P. Biemer, M. Collins, E. De Leeuw, C. Dippo, N. Schwarz, & D. Trewin (Eds.), *Survey measurement and process quality* (pp. 141-164). John Wiley & Sons.

Lax, D. A., & Sebenius, J. K. (1986). *The manager as negotiator: Bargaining for cooperation and competitive gain*. Free Press.

Lax, D. A., & Sebenius, J. K. (2006). *3-D negotiation: Powerful tools to change the game in your most important deals*. Harvard Business Press.

Lewicki, R. J., & Hiam, A. (2008). *Mastering business negotiation: A working guide to making deals and resolving conflict*. Wiley.

Lewicki, R. J., & Wiethoff, C. (2000). Trust, trust development, and trust repair. In M. Deutsch & P. T. Coleman (Eds.), *The handbook of conflict resolution: Theory and practice* (pp. 86-107). Jossey-Bass.

Lewicki, R. J., Barry, B., & Saunders, D. M. (2016). *Essentials of negotiation* (6th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.

Lewicki, R. J., Saunders, D. M., & Minton, J. W. (1999). *Negotiation* (2nd ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Likert, R. (1932). A Technique for the Measurement of Attitudes. *Archives of Psychology*, 140, 1–55.

Mahmutovic, J. (2020). What is a Likert Scale? Definition, Examples, and How To Use One. Available at: <https://www.surveylegend.com/likert-scales/likert-type-scale-responsesexamples-withexamples/#:~:text=Are%20Likert%20Scales%20Quantitative%20or,scale%20is%20al most%20universally%20loved> (Accessed May 4, 2024)

Malhotra, D., & Bazerman, M. H. (2008). *Negotiation genius: How to overcome obstacles and achieve brilliant results at the bargaining table and beyond*. Bantam.

Molm, L. D., Takahashi, N., & Peterson, G. (2000). Risk and trust in social exchange: An experimental test of a classical proposition. *American Journal of Sociology*, 105(5), 1396–1427.

Neale, M. A., & Bazerman, M. H. (1991). *Cognition and rationality in negotiation*. Free Press.

Norman, G. (2010). Likert scales, levels of measurement, and the "laws" of statistics. *Advances in Health Sciences Education*, 15(5), 625–632.

Northcraft, G. B., & Neale, M. A. (1987). Experts, amateurs, and real estate: An anchoring-and-adjustment perspective on property pricing decisions. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 39(1), 84–97.

Preston, C. C., & Colman, A. M. (2000). Optimal number of response categories in rating scales: reliability, validity, discriminating power, and respondent preferences. *Acta Psychologica*, 104(1), 1-15.

Pruitt, D. G., & Rubin, J. Z. (1986). *Social conflict: Escalation, stalemate, and settlement*. Random House.

Reja, U., Manfreda, K. L., Hlebec, V., & Vehovar, V. (2003). Open-ended vs. close-ended questions in web questionnaires. *Developments in Applied Statistics*, 19(1), 159–177.

Rubin, R. (2002). Will the Real SMART Goals Please Stand Up? Retrieved from Researchgate:
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/255601388_Will_the_real_SMART_goals_please_stand_up (Accessed March 27, 2024)

Shell, G. R. (2006). *Bargaining for advantage: Negotiation strategies for reasonable people*. Penguin.

Sidney, S. (2019, Jan 23). Creating a Win-Win strategy during a negotiation. Retrieved from Informa: <https://informaconnect.com/creating-a-win-win-strategy-during-a-negotiation/> (Accessed March 27, 2024)

Smith, J. A. (2015). *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods*. Sage.

Thibaut, J. W., & Kelley, H. H. (1959). *The social psychology of groups*. Wiley.

Thomas, D. C., Elron, E., Stahl, G., Ekelund, B. Z., Ravlin, E. C., Cerdin, J. L., ... & Lazarova, M. B. (2008). Cultural intelligence: Domain and assessment. *International Journal of Cross-Cultural Management*, 8(2), 123-143.

Thompson, L. L. (1990). Negotiation behavior and outcomes: Empirical evidence and theoretical issues. *Psychological Bulletin*, 108(3), 515–532

Thompson, L. L. (2005). *The mind and heart of the negotiator* (3rd ed.). Prentice Hall.

Thompson, L. L., Wang, J., & Gunia, B. C. (2010). Negotiation. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 61, 491-515.

Trochim, W. M., & Donnelly, J. P. (2008). *"The Research Methods Knowledge Base"* (3rd ed.). Atomic Dog Publishing.

Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1974). Judgment under uncertainty: Heuristics and biases. *Science*, 185(4157), 1124–1131.

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Negotiation Strategies: An overview of essential skills and approaches

This questionnaire is included for the needs of a Master Dissertation prepared for the postgraduate program of Supply Chain Management (SCM) of the Hellenic Open University (HOU). The purpose of this questionnaire is to understand ***the behavior and approaches of individuals before and during negotiation scenarios***. All of the questions/statements focus on your viewpoint and background. In addition, certain demographics are required.

This questionnaire takes about 12 minutes to complete. Your responses are strictly confidential and will be used solely for academic research. The data will not be shared with third parties. Kindly offer sincere and precise answers to the best of your ability. Your input is invaluable for the success of this research project. Thank you for your time and cooperation.

* Indicates required question

Demographic Data

1. Gender: *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Male
☐ Female
☐ Prefer not to say

2. Age: *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ 24 or less
- ☐ 25 to 34
- ☐ 35 to 44
- ☐ 45 to 54
- ☐ 55 to 64
- ☐ 65 or more

3. Are you currently working? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

4. If yes, in which field?

5. How long have you had experience with negotiations? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ ≤ 6 months
- ☐ 1 year
- ☐ ≥ 1 year
- ☐ ≥ 2 years
- ☐ ≥ 4 years
- ☐ ≥ 6 years
- ☐ ≥ 8 years

Before the Negotiation

It is essential to consider certain preparatory steps before undertaking any negotiation, regardless of its complexity.

Please, indicate your level of agreement as follows:

1-

Strongly Disagree

2- Disagree

3- Neither agree nor disagree

4- Agree

5- Strongly Agree

INFORMATION GATHERING

6. 1. It takes time for research and information gathering in the preparatory phase of negotiation. *

Mark only one oval.

1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

7. 2. It is not important to know the other party's needs and understand their point of view. *

Mark only one oval.

1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

PLANNING PHASE

8. 3. Do you believe a well-defined communication plan contributes to successful negotiation outcomes? *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

9. 4. To what extent do you agree that negotiation preparation and right planning contribute to value generation and reaching mutually advantageous agreements? *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

10. 5. Effective team planning leads to significant results than individual efforts. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

11. 6. During the preparation process, I examine my own interests without understanding those of my counterparts. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

12. 7. I can easily recognize potential risks in the negotiation without noting them beforehand. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

13. 8. The "cost" of concessions is something that must be calculated before the negotiation. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

SETTING GOALS

14. 9. Spending time to establish precise objectives and goals before the negotiation is critical. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

15. 10. All goals are important and that's why I don't prioritize objectives and evaluate potential trade-offs. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

16. 11. It is important to set flexible limits and goals to adapt to changing circumstances during negotiation. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

17. 12. Let's say you are a buyer, and your plan is to achieve a price decrease for a specific product. Do you agree that this is a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) goal? *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

NEGOTIATION STRATEGIES

18. 13. Rate the importance of developing negotiation strategies tailored to the specific context and goals of the negotiation process. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

19. 14. Despite unforeseen events or potential disruptions, you have to keep one strategy during the negotiation process. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

20. 15. I believe that a negotiation strategy that allows both parties to achieve their objectives, without compromising excessively is preferable. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

21. 16. I believe that a negotiation strategy that focuses on my win against the others is preferable. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

During the Negotiation

In each negotiation, there are particular approaches that demand thoughtful examination. Don't forget that the goal is to secure the most advantageous outcome possible.

Please, indicate your level of agreement as follows:

- 1- Strongly Disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 3- Neither agree nor disagree
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

OPENING STAGE

22. 17. The negotiation must be focused on the deal at hand, with no consideration for alternatives. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

23. 18. Establishing a positive atmosphere through greetings, introductions, and casual conversations influences the negotiation process positively. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

24. 19. In the opening stage of negotiation, it is important to show that I have the upper hand and not to develop a positive environment. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

EXPLORATION STAGE & INFORMATION EXCHANGE

25. 20. I would comprehend my own and my counterpart's requirements during the negotiation process. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

26. 21. I would employ active listening and empathy in my communication during the negotiation. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

27. 22. It is right to communicate with transparency to promote understanding and collaboration during negotiations. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

28. 23. I would probably exchange information with my counterparts during negotiations. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

29. 24. To what extent do you believe delving deeper into issues, asking open-ended questions, and showing empathy are crucial in the exploration stage of negotiation? *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

APPROACHES, POLICIES & TACTICS DURING THE NEGOTIATION

30. 25. Building trust and relationships with counterparts is very important for me during the negotiation. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

31. 26. It is right to manage my emotions and display empathy in negotiations. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

32. 27. I am not concerned about the other party's interests. I just need to pursue my goals. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

33. 28. When a deadlock arises, it is a good moment to squeeze the opposing side more to get greater outcomes. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

34. 29. Please indicate your level of agreement with the statement: "Flexibility in problem-solving strategies is crucial for successful negotiation outcomes." *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

35. 30. Checking their understanding is a good policy as clarity is ensured, control is maintained, and it is a polite way to disagree with something. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

36. 31. To what extent do you agree with this statement: It is considered a big loss if you make concessions during bargaining. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

37. 32. Do you agree that various negotiation tactics (e.g. early price anchoring) in achieving favorable outcomes during bargaining are crucial? *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

CULTURAL & ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

38. 33. Cultural and contextual differences will not affect the negotiation. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

39. 34. Cultural intelligence (CQ) is very valuable in navigating cross-cultural negotiation scenarios, including understanding cultural differences, adjusting communication styles, and building trust. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

40. 35. Ethical considerations, like honesty, equity, and transparent communication don't play an important role in the negotiation process. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

POST NEGOTIATION

41. 36. Rate the importance of ensuring that all parties involved in the negotiation feel satisfied with the terms of the deal before closing. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

42. 37. It is not my job to oversee whether the agreement terms are implemented or to review and evaluate the results. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

Author’s Statement:

I hereby expressly declare that, according to the article 8 of Law 1559/1986, this dissertation is solely the product of my personal work, does not infringe any intellectual property, personality and personal data rights of third parties, does not contain works/contributions from third parties for which the permission of the authors/beneficiaries is required, is not the product of partial or total plagiarism, and that the sources used are limited to the literature references alone and meet the rules of scientific citations.