

## Professional's Common Skills on Negotiation

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### Abstract:

**Purpose and Originality:** This article concentrates on negotiation skills that can be used by professionals from different work field that requires negotiation. The survey identifies key negotiation skills that characterize different types of professionals.

**Method:** For the study, we used qualitative paradigm. We interviewed 18 people from different work fields with the purpose to see how the negotiation process is used in their daily life, what their negotiation skills are, and what are the common skills for negotiation.

**Results:** Participants stated specific negotiating skills which are universal, that you can use on a daily basis no matter what profession. These are defined and clear goals, good preparation, where it is important to check client, building trust and seeking for win/win outcome.

**Society:** We communicate on a daily basis, and throughout the day, we experience negotiating, whether we are aware of it or not. Knowledge of key negotiation skills enhances the effectiveness of communication with people in everyday life.

**Limitations / further research:** The limitation that arises in qualitative research, which is also a limitation of our research, is the difficulty of generalizing data, which means that data cannot be generalized to the entire population. For further exploration, we propose to use a quantitative methodology. It would be also useful to present best practices of negotiation in various professions.

**Keywords:** negotiation, negotiation skills, negotiation theory, life experience, key skills.

## 1 Introduction

Most professions use some principle of negotiation in its everyday operation. One could say that the form of negotiation differs from one profession to another, or the amount of usage is lower or higher from each other. Still, the fact of the matter remains that dealing with other people in most professions is a must. It may be person to person, face to face, communication via telephone, emails, video conferences, or any other mode of newer technology available to us today. People do business with other people. We have not yet reached the level of actual artificial intelligence domination or capability of independent thinking and decision making from machines on a large market. Perhaps one day that will also arrive, time will tell. Therefore, most all professions use and need to negotiate with someone else, or with a group of people, to get ahead and develop their business.

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From business people, in private or public sector, from a manager to medical nurse, and into the creative artistic realm, people need to negotiate with someone in their daily lives. Most artists, actors, writers, etc. ... negotiate with managers that represent them in order to sign contracts that allow them to get paid for their actual work to be done or tasks that have been already completed. The element of negotiation is always in the background, no matter what the profession is concretely. The same holds true for lawyers, tourist workers, public workers, workers in the private sector, athletes, and managers of companies. Even though an artist or athlete will not necessarily negotiate with individuals or groups of people they will work for, they still have to negotiate and come to agreements with their representatives, in order for them to first proceed further with their negotiations. Sometimes, individuals decide to represent themselves, upon which, the negotiation role comes to the forefront, and they have to use the different skills that negotiators need to accomplish their goals in the business side of the profession.

The professions that use negotiation in their daily existence will use different styles and forms, ones that are more adapt to their particular needs and operations. Also two business people discussing how to close a deal would use different manners of ways to manipulate each other in order to come to a final agreement on a business proposition.

The purpose of our research, however, was to find out what professionals have in common from different fields since, for optimal performance in negotiations, one has to have an in-depth knowledge and similar behaviour in negotiating skills. Skills that enable one to achieve their ultimate goals in a specific negotiation.

## **2 Theoretical framework**

The world is changing and, in every profession, negotiation skills are an important part of our daily work. Some people are natural in negotiating and negotiations comes to them without effort. For others, it is a challenge. But that does not mean that one cannot learn how to negotiate. Books on negotiation had a big breakthrough in the 80s and became an essential part in demonstrating advice, tactics, and strategies. These books were full of examples of academic and celebrated negotiators who showed how to become successful negotiators. Therefore, one can say that, the art of negotiating is an essential skill for every profession.

Historically the word negotiate is derived from the Latin infinitive *negotiaari* meaning “to trade or do business”. This verb itself was derived from another, *negare*, meaning “to deny” and a noun, *otium*, meaning “leisure”. Therefore, the ancient Roman businessman would “deny leisure” until the deal had been settled (Curry, 1999, pp. 5). According to Oxford English Dictionary (2009, pp. 238) negotiation means “to have formal discussions with someone in order to reach an agreement with them”.

By Patrick Forsyth (2009, pp. 23) “the negotiating process involves balancing matters between two parties so that the negotiator not only gets what he wants but also gets what he wants in the best possible way”. When parties are not working together to reach an agreement, negotiation does not take place.

In negotiating, it is essential to set a goal and a strategy to objectively assess what kind of negotiators we are dealing with, and who is the leader of the negotiating team, if there are more than one person to deal with. The ultimate goal of negotiation is to sign an agreement, and the essence of the procedure is, mutual trust and cooperation. Negotiations demand the highest form of communication skills. They are based on a constructive relationship. Only objective interests and self-discipline must be present when negotiating. Other emotions must be excluded during the process. It is also necessary to take the first step as soon as possible during discussion, to open up wisely and take calculated risks. Your own objectives must be at the forefront and compromise must not be ruled out. Last but not least, it is important to know that negotiations are a sort of interpersonal communication. We always negotiate with people, not machines. Therefore, the ability to communicate interpersonally is at least as important as is the knowledge of the negotiating subject itself and negotiation skills (Forsty, 2009, pp. 6-7).

It is essential to keep in mind that negotiation is not a competitive sport. This does not mean, however, that we are never in a contest with other parties. However, we are not competing intending to make sure we crush the opposition. Instead, we are aiming to do the best we can for ourselves. Using this philosophy, we are less interested in the sporting aim of competing and more interested in looking out for ourselves, and our own interests. In negotiation, you want to do well for yourself, but not because you want to beat someone else. Effective negotiation is held in its proper context as a mechanism for pursuing interests (Cohen, 2002, pp. 117).

All negotiations go through the following phases, i.e. preparation, establishing rapport, discussion, proposals, bargaining, and reaching settlement. Preparation is the first phase of the negotiation process, where negotiators consider the issues involved, interests of both parties, and objectives (Laws, 2000, pp. 13). The first step, preparing, is where the parties determine their goals for the negotiation. Each party must first determine its BATNA, colloquially often referred to as “best alternative to a negotiated agreement”, or often referred to as (best case scenario), and its WATNA or “worst alternative to a negotiated agreement” (the worst-case scenario). These two represent the extreme possibilities. And negotiation is about getting a settlement that’s as close as possible to one’s best case scenario (Fisher, Ury and Patton, 2011, pp. 43). Establishing rapport and introduction as part of the negotiations, helps to create a positive atmosphere for the meeting. During discussion phase, you get to know more about the other party’s interests and objectives (Laws, 2000, pp. 32). At this point, you need to know that not all of the people you negotiate with will be familiar with the principles of collaborative negotiation and you will need to use discussion to open them up to the increased possibilities that come with collaboration (Presman, 2016, pp.55). In the proposal phase, parties are trying to find ways to overcome the obstacles (Laws, 2000, pp. 101). Getting a proposal is a critical part of getting to an agreement. It is important not to put too much into a first proposal. You should be looking to make it easy to be accepted. Even if that means leaving out variables that you will want to include as you finalize the agreement (Presman, 2016, pp. 58). In the bargaining phase, each party gives suggestions about how an agreement might be reached (Laws, 2000, pp. 105). Bargaining phase demonstrates the balanced nature of negotiations and the mutual exchanges to agreement (Presman, 2016, pp. 59). In the phase reaching settlement,

each party decides that there is nothing to be gained by bargaining any further and so the bargaining ends (Laws, 2000, pp. 103). Good agreements are crafted in such a way that they are clear, and easy to execute (Presman, 2016, pp. 61).

There are different outcomes of negotiations, i.e. win-win, win-lose and lose-lose outcome. In a “win-win” outcome both parties walk away from the bargaining table with a mutually beneficial deal typically refers to integrative negotiations in which negotiators trade-off issues to create value (Brett & Thompson, 2016, pp. 70; Schaerer et al., 2020, pp. 104). Win-win negotiators are characterized as desiring to learn information about their partner’s goals, focusing on realizing joint benefits, and strengthening long-term relationships (Mintu-Wimsatt & Graham, 2004, pp. 348). In win-lose communication one party benefits to the detriment of the other. If the negotiators fail to reach an agreement, both parties may end up in worse positions than when they started the negotiations, this is often included as a lose-lose outcome (Martinez, 2020).

The aim of the study was to present perspectives on negotiation by professionals from different work fields and to present common negotiation skills they use. We did this research, because we want to know if the form and skills of negotiation differs from one profession to another. The fact of the matter is that negotiating with other people in most professions is a must and the element of negotiation is always in the background no matter what the profession is concretely. For this reason, we were interested in the perspectives of various experts on the negotiations and common skills they use during negotiations.

### **3 Method**

The research uses qualitative method. Data derived from interviews with professionals in different working fields that have an absolute need to negotiate every single day, many times a day, in order to achieve their goals and successfully fulfil their needs. In order to achieve credibility of the research, professionals from different professional fields were selected and interviewed, which gives a wide-angle of many different approaches to 'getting what you want' by using many different techniques. Special attention has been given to collect information from proven successful professionals, from their daily walks of life, and their knowledge of practical ways of getting results, from their vast experiences in their proper fields.

To have a broader aspect of the use of negotiation in every working day, you will find here three different groups of experts. They were interviewed and probed in order to get their different perspectives in their use of the skills in negotiation. Participants were chosen by a criterion that they are involved in negotiation processes at least once a week, they are not younger than 25 years old, and have a minimum of five years of work experience.

Groups of people who know the characteristics of negotiations and meet with their counterparts at least once a week were selected. In the case of a qualitative methodology, it made sense to include in the research, people who qualified as a representative sample in terms of experience and views. Subjectivity could not be avoided in this type of research, but subjectivity did affect what views the individuals expressed in their research, and therefore did not affect the analysis and outcomes.

The main thrust of the analysis comes from three different fields:

1) The first group was designed to represent a large sector of the people in general, which is the private sector. Private business people, entrepreneurs, and creative profit builders were selected to see if there was a real difference of strategy and system in approaching potential new clients, and learning about which methods, if any, were applied during negotiating. In the private sector there were six interviews done. The CEO of a Slovenian company in the field of construction, 15 years of experience in the company, one CEO of an Israeli company in the field of Bio-Medical field, with 30 years of experience in business, one bank employee from an International bank group, 18 years of experience in the banking world, one head of PR in international banking, 20 years of experience in banking, of which three are head of PR, one lawyer of 8 years experience in the big corporations department, and 1 hotel manager in the tourism field with 12 years of experience.

2) The second group represents people who do work in the service of the public, such as above stated. Their thoughts and experiences do make a difference in the results achieved for the governments they work for, to ensure a right amount of success and development to the public looking for answers to their problems, challenges and desires. Participants in this group were: one professor of Medical University, with over 20 years of experience in leadership, three hospital employees, with a combined experience of 25 years of experience in the hospital service. Nurse, doctor and administrator, and two municipality employees that had worked for the same city for over eight years each, participated in this group of experts. All the participants mentioned are heads of various departments and are involved in the negotiation processes.

3) The third group was made to step out of the box of ordinary, practical work, and stepping into the world of the creative mind. Thus, the artistic world was of particular interest and experts in this field have unravelled fascinating revelations on their approach to how best results are obtained, and cross similarities between the business and artistic fields. Participants in this group were: one international orchestra conductor, with over 30 years of experience on the international scene with different orchestras, two instrumental soloists and chamber musicians, playing their instruments for over 40 years each, one professional dancer, with seven years in a professional dance group, and two opera singers, one internationally known with 20 years of experience and the other, six years singing in one opera house in Europe. All of them have rich experiences in the field of negotiations.

The interviews were one on one as a semi-structured interview, which is a more flexible version of the structured interview as "it allows depth to be achieved by providing the opportunity on the part of the interviewer to probe and expand the interviewee's responses" (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, pp. 88).

The three interviews were used as a test, to clarify the selection of questions, to correct wording, set approximate timing. In a test interview, there were ten questions set, but due to a qualitative approach, the questions were reduced into the following:

1. Short description of business path.
2. How did you learn to negotiate?

3. How do you prepare for the negotiation?
4. What skills do you use for negotiation?
5. How do you deliver in negotiation or how do you present the value you bring to the table when negotiating a deal?
6. How do you conclude the negotiations?

The goal was to select the questions that would fit every job description, and from there to have more qualitative answers, with the conclusion of writing three negotiation experiences.

The use of private, one on one interviews was conducted, for each person approached. Everyone was asked the same questions, where each question developed into a broader story. Due to some of participant's longer work experiences, we were able to collect data from the early negotiation stage to more developed stages.

The majority of the candidates were met face to face and interviewed individually. In a few cases, in the private and artistic sector, some were interviewed by phone.

A total of 18 candidates were interviewed in all, from anywhere 1 – 2 hours was usually taken to complete each interview.

In order to analyse the qualitative data, we used a program called Leximancer, which is a text mining software that can be used to analyse the content of collections of textual documents and to display the extracted information in a browser, visually. Automated content analysis is commonly used text-mining tool for the purpose of qualitative synthesis. It enables processing high volumes of data without human bias. Its process has three stages: identification, definition and text classification (Nunez-Mir et al., 2016). The information is displayed through a conceptual map that provides an overview of the material, representing the main concepts contained within the text and how they are related. Of greater importance, the interactive map allows the researcher to further explore the concepts and their connectivity by linking the software findings back to the site in the original text (Leximancer, 2019).

## **4 Results and Discussion**

When interviewing the participants, the response regarding learning negotiation skills is that throughout their education, they gained some theoretical knowledge, but this is far from enough, which they realized when faced with different communication requirements in negotiations on a daily basis, especially in stressful situations. Most of the knowledge regarding communication skills in negotiating was gained by observing older colleagues or just life's experiences. Only a small percentage of the candidates had the opportunity to gain the skills via additional courses paid by their company and even a smaller percentage of people paid the course themselves.

To determine common skills used by different professionals, which refer to »a subset of knowledge and behaviours that influence bargaining performance« (Lewicki, 1997, pp. 261) and are effective when they achieve negotiation goals or when they grow out of an understanding of the process that

surpasses minimal performance (Roloff, Putnam, & Anastasiou, 2003, pp. 823), we used Leximancer program.

Leximancer generated a total of 40 concepts and 10 themes from interview transcripts. Table 1 presents themes, hits, and related concepts.

Table 1. Themes and concepts derived from transcripts of interviews.

Number	Theme	Hits	Concepts
1	Client	338	client, business, understand, negotiation, try, important, value, goal, build
2	Negotiating	284	negotiating, check, use, person, possible, culture, working
3	Bank	161	bank, offer, deal, price, asked, offered, lower, half
4	Negotiate	136	negotiate, situation, outcome, experiences
5	Present	88	present, order
6	Company		company, relationship
7	Job	79	job, win-win
8	negotiations	64	negotiations, conclude
9	approach	62	approach, win
10	benefit	54	benefit, hand

The 10 themes, i.e. concepts that have some commonality or connectedness, are: “client”, “negotiating”, “bank”, “negotiate”, “present”, “company”, “job”, “negotiations”, “approach”, and “benefit”. The detail concept map can be seen in Figure 1. Themes with related concepts are presented in the circles. A red and orange colour presents the most important themes, while blue and green colours, less important themes (Pucihar, 2020, pp. 3).

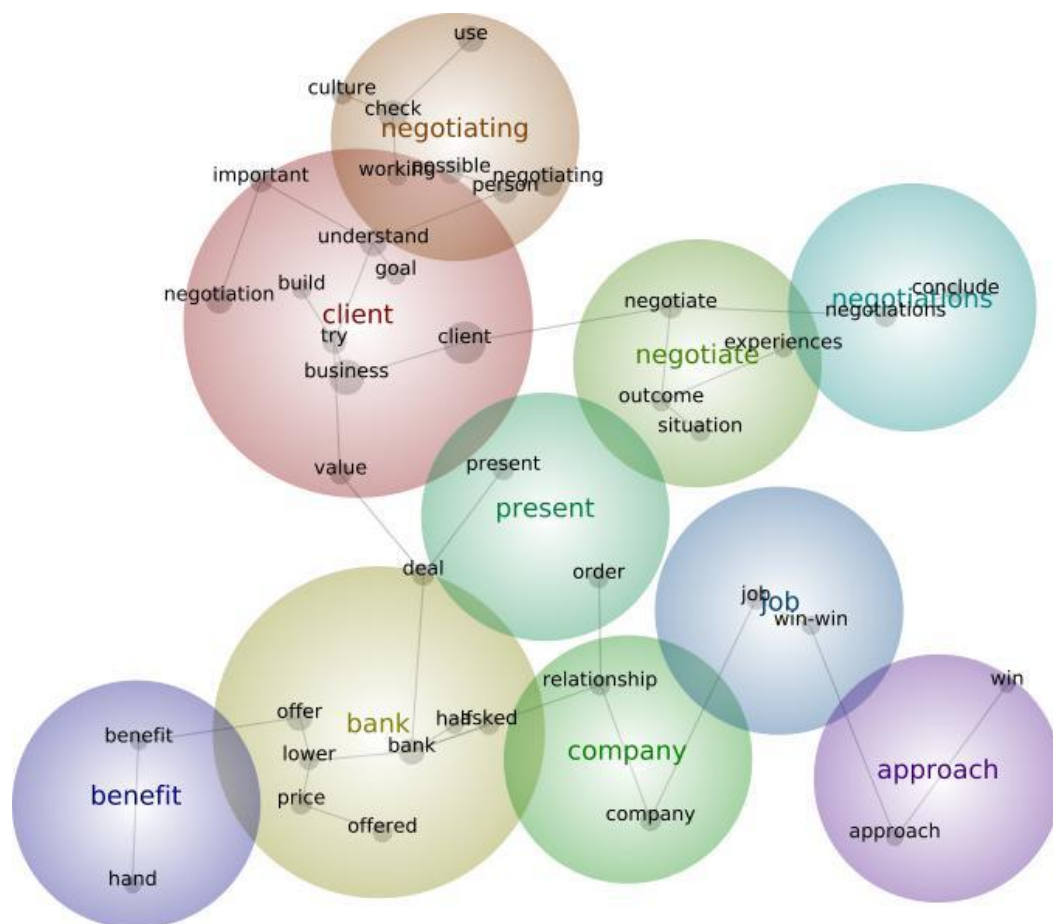


Figure 1. Concept map.

From the Figure 1, it can be seen that theme “client” is the largest and central topic and it is related to the concepts “business”, “understand”, “negotiation”, “try”, “important”, “value”, “goal”, and “build”. The second largest topic is “negotiating” that includes concepts “check”, “use”, “person”, “possible”, “culture” and “working”. The third theme is “bank” and it is related to the concepts “offer”, “deal”, “price”, “asked”, “offered”, “lower”, and “half”. The fourth theme is “negotiate” that includes concepts “situation”, “outcome”, and “experiences”. Other topics are “present”, “company”, “job”, “negotiations”, “approach”, and “benefit”. Some themes are overlapped, for example “client” to “negotiating” and “present”, “bank” to “present”, “company”, and “benefit”, “job” overlaps “company” and “approach” and “negotiate” overlaps “present” and “negotiations”.



Table 2. Example quotes for each theme.

Theme	Example quotes
Client	"My preparation on negotiation include: 1-I must know exactly what I want from negotiation, what is my goal, where is the limit 2-I check the client: as much as possible; business and private. I try to understand the client why the business proposal is good for him, what is his need, what is important to him ... 3-I prepare scenario a), b) and maybe c) 4-I know how to build trust (I am sincere, I listen carefully, I have eye contact, I show interest ...)"
Negotiating	"If possible, I use the existing (past) collaboration data, find out the business details from any mutual business partners, check the market the client is working with, and I use all the media/online data available. I do not check the culture, personality, business path before the meeting, but I always find out during the introduction conversation of the negotiation."
Bank	"My partner and I offered half of the price, and the seller immediately refused our offer. We offered the same price again, and we got the same answer."
Negotiate	"The client has miscalculated the rates and found out the situation after six months and came to us to negotiate the reduction rate to decrease the amount of loss."
Present	"So, they know what they gain from the solution that I present."
Company	"In company, trust is a crucial part of it if you believe as I do, that long term relationship is the way to go." "Honesty and fairness are necessary for a long term relationship."
Job	"I asked myself why I should change the job, and under what conditions, so I present them. They liked me in the interviews, and I was relaxed and self-confident, because I did not have anything to lose, so we conclude negotiations with the win-win position."
negotiations	"I conclude negotiations when I sell my idea or product to someone else who can handle the process and the risk factor that goes along with putting a new product on the consumer buying global market."
Approach	"I'm always aiming to a win/win approach because in the long run, this is the only way to make the relationship last."
Benefit	"I start the opening cautiously, meaning that I do share what I think of absolute benefit. I do start playing with my cards open, but not necessarily by starting with an open hand."

*We found out that topic "client" is related to the concepts "business", "understand", "negotiation", "try", "important", "value", "goal", and "build" and topic "negotiate" includes concepts "situation", "outcome", and "experiences".*

Explanation: For a negotiation to succeed, you need a clear sense of what you want the outcome to be. The outcome comes from your experience and also situation in the negotiation process. If you do not have defined goals in mind, you're unlikely to come away from negotiations with the outcome that's best for you. An effective negotiator operates within a framework that supports the strategic goals of the organization. This is only possible when those goals are clear. Management has a responsibility to communicate goals to everyone. That communication is the best assurance of alignment between goals and employee behaviours and negotiation outcomes (Luecke, 2003). Before presenting the value to the client, participants try to figure out what are the values of the counterpart. Understanding the values is the key to knowing what to present. All participants from all three fields are very prepared knowledge-wise before going to meetings. Few of the participants who come mostly from the private sector explained that they go through the subject of the negotiation if it is a product; they review the characteristics of the offer before they start the

negotiations. They also know how to build trust (I am sincere, I listen carefully, I have eye contact, I show interest, etc.).

*The second largest topic is “negotiating” that includes concepts “check”, “use”, “person”, “possible”, “culture” and “working”.*

All participants agree that preparation is a necessity and has become a standard policy, including basically 80% by search engines on the internet, and 20% asking referrals from people. If it is a new business partner, the only options are social media or news. If it is an older client, the majority of participants ask around within the organisation if anyone had experience with that person. The artists usually check, within their network and their current agents, information and knowledge about the person.

Majority of the participants explained in short, the preparation:

1. I must know exactly what I want from the negotiation, what is my goal, where is the limit.
2. I check the client: as much as possible; business and private. I try to understand the client why the business proposal is good for him/her, what is his/her need, what is important to him/her.
3. If possible, I use the existing (past) collaboration data, find out the business details from any mutual business partners, check the market in which the client is working in, and I use all the media/online data available for my needs.
4. I prepare two to three scenarios, of how the negotiation should go.
5. I know how to build trust.

Eight participants out of 18 had similar answers, which was that you had to prepare before the meeting, know the product, the background and what the outcome of the meeting/negotiations should be. For them, it was important to recognize the strong point, and to find solutions for the weak ones before the meeting.

Almost all of the participants agreed to check who the client is, before negotiating. You use Google, LinkedIn, to help to understand which topics interests that person. And of course, there are some other topics where you see them involved in projects, or other hobbies they have. Trying to understand the characteristics of the person, most of the participants, especially the ones who interact globally with clients, agree that checking the culture of your client is important, and what types of private interests they have. We are dealing with people; even if you think you have the best solution for their need, if you are not able to communicate person to person on their level, everything is in vain. So, this is why you need to understand the involvement of this person, not necessarily job-wise, but personal wise, so that you know when you begin to discuss with the client, who is sitting in front of you, and try to connect on the human level. Also, quick adjustment ("thinking on your feet") for negotiation, utterly confident, but a friendly stance and way to get what you want without being unfriendly or even disrespectful.

One of the participants with work experience of over 30 years gave us a fascinating insight that three decades ago people did not have internet, they did not have Google to look into for information on anything they were interested in. Calling people on the phone was not as simple as it is today. Everything was to be done one on one, and face to face. Therefore, negotiating was a real art form and not just a mental preparation in knowing your client (KYC), as is the norm today in 2020.

Only one participant from the public sector said that he does not check the culture, personality, or the business path of the client before the meeting, but he always finds it out during the introduction conversation of the negotiation. He uses psychology especially, to evaluate the person and adjust as much as possible to the person's expectations.

Successful people are the ones who use self-discipline, preparation, consistency and focus whenever a negotiation is due. No problem is too big to handle, and they make the opposite side feel the same way as well. When pressure is lifted by careful manipulation of challenges that may lay ahead, all is possible to achieve (Dinnar & Susskind, 2018, pp. 409). A negotiator who is well prepared will be more successful than one who is not well prepared. Preparation phase helps the negotiator to organise her or his thoughts before starting to negotiate (Laws, 2000, pp. 102). In order to connect and collaborate most effectively with another person, it is worth thinking about them as individuals, and exploring how their own unique personality may affect the way they are likely to collaborate with you (Presman, 2016, pp. 53).

*Topic "job" is related to win/win approach.*

Explanation: Out of 18 participants, 15 of them are aiming for a total win-win situation. Participants described that seeking for a win/win situation is definitely what we all should do because, in the long run, that is the only way to make the client relationship last. Win-win situation is the best, and the client should have a feeling the discussion is going his preferred way. It also depends on the situation, the type of client and the topic of the negotiation. A participant from the private sector also explained: "if I am offering a deal with a certain price, and I know that this price can be lower, obviously you do not go with the lower price to the potential buyer, you try to earn as much as possible." The other 3 participants explained that the win-win situation for them depends on the client's approach. In the majority of cases, it is a win-win scenario, which explains very well mutual benefits in order to avoid any misunderstandings. The client must know the vision/sales methods of our company, so he/she would feel like an extended part of it.

A deal reached with anyone, which results in a win/win situation is one that is beneficial to both parties. A benefit arrived from any source of knowledge accumulated by past and present experiences. Those who reach win/win situations in negotiations are the ones who focus intensely on the other person's needs, desires and well-being, as well as one's interests—often leading to long-term constructive relationships as well (Brett & Thompson, 2016, pp. 73; Schaerer et al., 2020, pp. 201). We usually negotiate with the same people on a regular basis, for this reason, it is

important to develop a relationship with them so that they are willing to do business with you again (Brown, 2010).

*Topic “negotiation” is related to “conclude” and topic “company” is related to “relationship”, where trust was often mentioned.*

Explanation: The conclusion of negotiating is the most important, and participants had to say, for example, the following: “I conclude negotiations with a summary of benefits for the client and myself and aim to build trust.” All of the participants from all three sectors agreed that honesty and fairness in the whole process of negotiating are necessary for a long-term relationship. Trust is interconnected, and if you are honest, this builds trust. They also agree that if they show trust, how can they trust the opposite side especially if they have a feeling that the other side is not completely honest, sincere, or is lying or hiding too much of valuable information during the talks. The candidates were divided in half. One half saying they would stay until the end of the negotiation with a smile on their face, and then after the meeting, they would find a new partner. The other half would go by “honesty is the best policy”, and confronts the other party there and then. Most participants who come from the younger generation, (30-35 years old), said that it is always good to present a summary in a way suitable to you, so it remains in your client’s head before he leaves. Participants all agreed that the conclusion is when a deal is reached. When I am able to convince the opposite party to go my way, I have reached my goal. Selling a product to a client or a distributor is tremendously challenging in today's world. Competition to bring the next best product is enormous, supply and demand is everyone's game, and everyone is playing it to the fullest. 5 out of 18 participants mentioned that conclusion is reached when you get lucky after you have done everything the right way, including media presentation and media marketing.

Trust is recognized as crucial element for successful negotiation by both academia and practitioners (Ferrin et al., 2011; Kong et al., 2014; Lopez-Fresno, Savolainen & Miranda, 2018) and is related to personal qualities (Pruitt, 1981). What more than simple trust is needed to make negotiations unravel in a beneficial way towards your interest? Believing in someone's credibility, honesty and conviction often speaks a long way for obtaining positive results in discussions and at the bargaining table, no matter if the person is intellectual or emotional in its core. Success is achieved when trust is conceived. There is no right or wrong in outcomes of negotiations, if you put two win choices on the negotiating table. Find the solutions to any challenge by a winning smile and a positive attitude, and negotiating takes a whole different turn and meaning besides knowledge alone (Fells, 2019).

*Topic “benefit” is related to “hand” (open cards).*

6 participants out of 18 had a similar answer: "I start the opening cautiously, meaning that I do share what I think is of absolute benefit. I do start playing with my cards open, but not necessarily by starting with an open hand. Meaning that I am transparent when needed. I would not withhold something that would hurt the counterpart, on the other hand, if I do not see a value for anybody to disclose something, and then basically it may not be necessary, it may even complicate things.

## 5 Conclusion

The world has changed dramatically indeed, but success in negotiations has remained standstill as far as the principles of having success is concerned. The main purpose of this article was to initiate a discussion on negotiations skills in different professions. At the beginning of the research process, we interviewed 18 people from different work fields with the purpose to see how the negotiation process is used in their daily life. All of the participants agreed that there are specific negotiating skills which are universal, that you can use on a daily basis no matter what profession. The opinion of the majority of participants is that all parties win in successful negotiations. Pre-negotiation planning and preparation, according to participants' opinions, improve the outcome of negotiations. Also, knowledge, time and trust play an essential role in the negotiation process. The one essential point that came out throughout the research on negotiations, is that all the candidates that were approached, without exception mentioned that they had to learn to negotiate on the spot, without any prior preparation or training on how to negotiate successfully. When interviewing the participants, the response regarding learning negotiation skills is that throughout the education, they gained some theoretical knowledge, but this is far from enough, which they realized when faced with different communication requirements in negotiations on a daily basis, especially in stressful situations. Most of the knowledge regarding communication skills in negotiating was gained by observing older colleagues or just life experience. Only small percentage of people have the opportunity to gain the skills via additional courses paid by their company or even smaller percentage of people to join the course paid by themselves.

This point made us think how to create a program in high schools throughout the world, that begins to train and teach young people the principles of negotiating early on in their lives, even before actually choosing their majors or professions in colleges and universities. If young people were given courses in high school on how to use self-control, how to listen, how to have mutual respect, diplomatic technics, and other essential principles on dealing with people in general, the situations where negotiating would be necessary later on in their lives, would be confronted with much more confidence and knowledge. Thus, young business people, creative artists, medical nurses, doctors, public workers and other professionals would have better chances early on their professions to become more successful when negotiating.

The research represents a contribution to the profession in a less studied segment of management, and at the same time offers a real insight into the challenges of negotiation in various professions.

The limitation of the study is that it is difficult to generalize data to the entire population. For further exploration, we propose to use a quantitative methodology. It would be also useful to present best practices of negotiation in various professions.

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## **Povzetek:**

### **Ključne veščine pogajanj strokovnjakov iz različnih področij**

**Raziskovalno vprašanje (RV):** Katere so ključne spretnosti na področju pogajanj, ki jih uporabljajo strokovnjaki z različnih področij?

**Namen:** Ta članek se osredotoča na pogajanja in skupne pogajalske veščine, ki jih uporabljajo strokovnjaki iz različnih področjih delovanja.

**Metoda:** Za namene raziskave smo uporabili kvalitativno paradigmo. Anketirali smo 18 strokovnjakov iz različnih delovnih področij, da bi videli, kako poteka njihov pogajalski postopek v vsakdanjem življenju. Analizirali smo transkripte intervjujev s pomočjo programa za avtomatsko analizo vsebine, s programom z imenom Leximancer.

**Rezultati:** Udeleženci so navedli posebne pogajalske veščine, ki so univerzalne, ki jih lahko uporabljate vsakodnevno, ne glede na poklic. To so opredeljeni in jasni cilji, dobra priprava, kjer je pomembno preveriti stranko, graditi zaupanje in iskati rezultat pogajanj, ki prinese izid zmaga/zmaga.

**Organizacija:** Svet se spreminja in v vsakem poklicu so pogajalske spretnosti pomemben del našega vsakodnevnega dela. Nekateri ljudje so večji v pogajanjih in imajo pogajanja tako rekoč že v krvi, vendar to ne pomeni, da se pogajanj ne moremo naučiti. Menedžerji bi morali imeti dobre pogajalske sposobnosti, da bi lahko vodili organizacijo kakovostno.

**Družba:** Vsakodnevno komuniciramo in ves dan se pogajamo, ali se tega zavedamo ali ne. Poznavanje ključnih spretnosti pogajanj izboljša veščine pogajanj.

**Originalnost:** Raziskava ugotavlja ključne spretnosti pogajanj, ki so značilne za več vrst strokovnjakov.

**Omejitev/nadaljnje raziskovanje:** Omejitev, ki se pojavi pri kvalitativnem raziskovanju in je tudi omejitev naše raziskave, težava posploševanja podatkov, kar pomeni, da podatke ne moremo posploševati na celotno populacijo. Za nadaljnje raziskovanje predlagamo uporabo kvantitativne metodologije. Prav tako bi bilo smiselno predstaviti dobre prakse pogajanj pri različnih poklicih.

**Ključne besede:** pogajanja, pogajalske spretnosti, teorija pogajanj, življenjske izkušnje, ključne spretnosti.

