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How to Use this Book

There are countless books on negotiation skills. *This* book awaits your *use*. It originates from a study carried out in collaboration with numerous seminar participants and should likewise remain dynamic and support you for many years. Hence, this book is not intended to be read once and then left aside (although I would be happy to you know you have read it in its entirety). Rather, it should be a valuable resource of reference, e.g. when preparing to deal with a specific negotiation type, or when deciding on your strategy. To stress my humanistic mindset, let me introduce some negotiators who will accompany you throughout this book:

The *Master Negotiator* stands by your side, gives tips and advice:



The *Researching Negotiator* gives facts, thoughts and theory:



The *Confused Negotiator* appears where typical mistakes are being described:



The *Courageous Negotiator* indicates options to try out:



In any case, I would appreciate you writing to me! Please send your comments directly to office@comeon.at or to the publishing house.

Preface

How does a book come into existence that brings together the experience of thousands of negotiators, from bankers to purchasers to jurists? I am somewhat lucky as a negotiation consultant and mediator. I need not go on a pilgrimage from executive to executive in search of people who would be willing to share their negotiation experiences with me.

Such a study would be immensely time consuming, not to mention the resistance to freely airing experiences with negotiation partners, and to being compared with colleagues and competitors. A requires a lot of courage to face one's doctrines, analyse own one's mistakes and learn from them.

All of the contributors to this book have demonstrated this courageous mindset, whether in workshops, coaching sessions or seminars. We have done a lot of analysing and reflecting together and scrutinised thousands of negotiations to find out what worked well or needs improvement.

Thank you for your courage, commitment and openness – you made this book possible!

THE MASTER NEGOTIATOR: BEHIND THE SCENES

Meetings deteriorate and business opportunities disappear. Long-held relations with colleagues and suppliers dissolve, and negotiators angrily find themselves before conciliation boards.

Widening markets and increasing competition necessitate mutual, beneficial and lasting negotiation results.

The skill of conducting profitable and successful long-term negotiations will continue to be in high demand. From a development-historical point of view: the once dominant hierarchical structures in society and politics left scarce room for negotiations.

But today's worldwide development towards partner-oriented relationships leaves the old patriarchal system behind. Simply consider the common setting of objectives in annual MBO (Management By Objective) employee meetings, the emancipation of women and the resulting changes in partnerships or the way children and parents interact nowadays.

However, plenty of negotiations turn sour every day, in private life as well as in business. Why? They predominantly fail because of the human factor.

Each chapter of this book corresponds to one of the six human factors important in negotiation.

While reading these chapters, memories of your own issues will surface. While revisiting past situations, some reactions will become more understandable.

You will realise that only in the rarest of cases is a technique decisive for success. Furthermore, there are many factors

influencing the result, the function of which is described in the “negotiation building” below.

All too often, negotiators are pitted against each other as enemies: their own vanities triumph, battles are fought and exhibition fights taken out. Negotiation partners put power thinking before factual questions, listen only selectively and let themselves be guided by their emotions. In perceived “zero-sum-games” there are only two options: victory or failure. If one gains, the other is bound to lose. That seems all too logical in a business world that cherishes cleverness as an executive ideal, and regards survival of the fittest as the norm.

Exploring the experience of countless workshop participants proves the opposite. For this exact reason, the master negotiator strategies are based on partnership and openness to the needs of the counterpart. This strategy is a far cry from weakness; in fact, it reflects self-interest.

He, who identifies the interests of his negotiation partner, identifies what to heed in order to also satisfy his own interests. Only if he manages to offer something of interest to his negotiation partner, and get something in return, will the outcome be successful, a real “deal”.

The Vision of the Negotiation Master as Target for Development

This headline is somewhat symptomatic of the contents of the entire book. Possibly you have already designated its significance and correlated it with your expectation of the contents, with all the inherent communication mistakes of selective perception. I plead with you to wait a while before casting judgement.

Possibly you see similarities to the first phase of the negotiation. Negotiators are often eager to put forward their arguments and less eager to listen.



“The vision of the Negotiation Master” could mean: the vision that *a third party, e.g. you as the reader*, has of a Negotiation Master; or the *vision of the Negotiation Master himself*.

In our case both meanings are important, and especially the comparison of the two: your vision of the Negotiation Master and his own area of focus.

For this reason, I ask you to take two minutes *right now* and quickly note on a piece of paper how *you* imagine the Negotiation Master to be. What does he look like? How is he dressed? Is it a male or female? How old? What is his facial expression? His tone of voice, etc.?

Research on the Master Negotiator

Defining a training objective is imperative for personal skill development. In order to change a negotiation style, one must identify what it should be changed to. We need a vision of a role model Negotiation Master.

The Vision of the Negotiation Master

This vision is strongly determined by personal experience. If I ask you for your “best negotiating experience”, a few negotiations will probably come to mind. Should you consider the different partners, irrespective of if it was your boss, a real estate salesperson, or auntie Elisabeth, you will find similarities.

The Starting Question

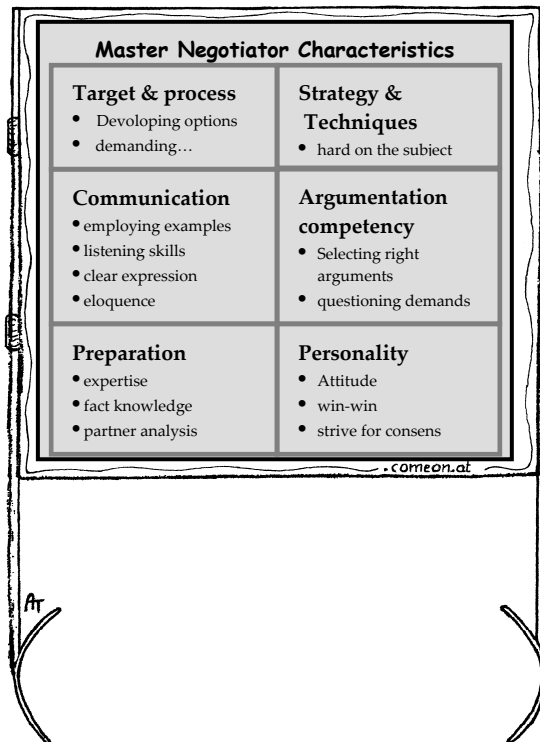
This is exactly what I asked thousands of workshop participants. We dug into their experience of countless negotiations and analysed them. My specific questions were like the ones I stated above. People of all different backgrounds, ages and genders have similarly been analysing their vision of the Master Negotiator.

Expectations & Research Findings

I expected to see big differences in the characteristics of the Master Negotiator, depending on the respective group and area of practice. I expected to find that Master Negotiator bankers would be strong

with numbers, Master Negotiator technicians would excel at emphasising detailed descriptions, etc.

However, this was not the case. Quite surprisingly, the ideal characteristics were quite similar. Of course, the situations were different according to background and position. But their skills were more or less identical. As the results were pinned up, I started gathering the areas of strength for the Master Negotiator:



The Conclusion

Firstly, regardless of the area people deal with, the recipe for success, the magic mixture of characteristics that make up the Master Negotiator stays fairly similar.



Secondly, all of the different characteristics are essential, not only one or a few. In particular, argumentation competency is *only one* of several needed strengths. All schools that limit their focus to this area miss out on 5/6 of the needed skills.

Thirdly, in order to improve negotiation results, the areas to concentrate on are clear: Preparation, Communication, Personality, Target and Process Knowledge, Strategies and Techniques and Argumentation Skills.

Fourthly, this approach allows us to structure every varied negotiation strategy.

The Strengths from a Bird's Eye View

A short overview of the strength areas will be followed by a detailed description in the corresponding chapters of this book.

Strength 1: Optimal Preparation

Always go into negotiations well prepared. This includes both informational preparation, i.e. factual knowledge and an understanding of your respective competencies, as well as the preparation of wishes, limitations and interests of the partner.

Strength 2: Negotiation Master Strategy

Different strategies strongly shape the behaviour and the success of the negotiation. The particular strategy should be chosen after defining the relationship as short or long term and assessing the potential for conflict.

Strength 3: Personality

The Master Negotiator has a very specific attitude in the negotiation process and radiates this toward his negotiation partners. Interestingly, his attitude was generally described as respectful and not, as one would assume, extremely competitive and inflexible. The facts speak clearly here: particularly good results were reached