

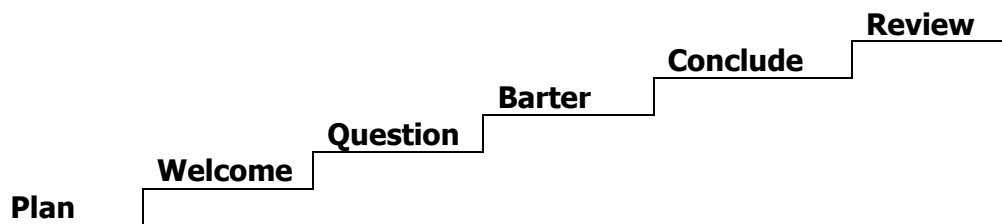
Top Tips

Negotiating

When might I negotiate?

Any discussion you have with another person, where both of you want to get something, can be described as a negotiation. It need not be you against them, but can be a constructive conversation. This could be for example when dealing with a customer complaint, or changing a team member's hours, where there are several possible courses of action and solutions you could offer.

The process can be broken down into six steps:



Planning -	doing your preparation, often the most important part
Welcome -	the atmosphere you decide to create
Questioning -	finding out what the other person wants
Bartering -	offer and counter-offer
Concluding -	drawing matters to a close
Reviewing -	how can you improve next time

Planning

- The more time spent planning, the better the likely outcome of your meeting
- Do your research and know your facts about the product, the market, the person, etc.
- Consider the matter from the other person's viewpoint, so you can prepare for their questions and objections
- Quantify each of your objectives in £ or other measure - which will benefit you most?
- Prioritise your objectives - which is the most important to achieve?
- Range your objectives – know what you must get, should get, and could get
- Identify the likely negotiating range (overlap of common goals) or gap (distance between them)
- Identify what you have that the other person wants, and what it's worth to them
- Identify where the power lies and why
- Consider your strategy and tactics - and the other person's possible responses

Welcome

- Prepare your meeting environment carefully - is it what you want?
- Consider the first impression that you will create - what should it be?

Questioning

- Check your assumptions and preparation are correct by asking questions
- Start with open questions, continue with probing questions, use closed questions to clarify

- Listen actively, reflect and summarise to clarify, take notes as reminders
- Body language - be aware of it but don't be obsessive!

Bartering

- Get the other person to make the first proposal
- Aim your counter-proposal high, but realistic
- Be assertive - it's a proposal, not a question - 'put up and shut up'
- Listen to the response. If it's 'no', then invite the other person to propose alternatives
- Compromise - 'if you will..... then I could.....'
- Always trade, never concede
- Don't give away the things they want, get something for them
- Make provisional offers based on conditional concessions from the other person
- Aim for a win/win solution
- Move your offers in small, consistent steps
- Maximise the value of your concessions, minimise the value of theirs
- Avoid emotive language
- Remain flexible and open-minded

Concluding

- Choose the right time to close, be firm
- Consider the concession close, final offer, alternative, or adjourn

If you are negotiating on the telephone:

- Take the initiative by making the call yourself
- Prepare as you would for a meeting
- Listen more intently – you only have the sense of sound to use
- Ask extra questions to ensure understanding
- Reflect, summarise, and take notes to help you keep track
- Don't make instant decisions - play for time to think if necessary

Review

- Consider what went well, what went less well, and what you would do differently next time

For related topics see Top Tips:

- **Assertiveness**
- **Body Language**
- **Influencing**