

What type of negotiator are you?

When thinking about negotiating, most people picture the hard approach, viewing negotiation as a battle of wills. Hard bargaining emphasizes results.

A hard negotiation approach has some common characteristics:

- Participants are adversaries
- The negotiator focuses on his or her position (an ambit claim or written demand is presented)
- Unwillingness to concede
- Bullying tactics are common where there is unevenness of power
- No sense of a continuing relationship (or a perception that there is a need for one)
- Belligerent behaviour and language is common (including threats)
- Aim for complete victory
- Attack individual people rather than the addressing a solution to a problem
- Can pressurise the other party
- Often lack of consideration for the needs of the other party
- Can be seen as a 'haggler'
- Usually are power-based negotiators who view successful negotiation as completely getting their own way

A soft negotiation approach also has common characteristics:

- Focuses on preserving the relationship ahead of results.
- Soft negotiators can see themselves as a victim of circumstance
- Participants are friends - focus is on building a relationship
- Willingness to concede
- Try to avoid conflict
- Generally willing to give in
- Will subjugate their need and resent the outcome after the event if the outcome is poor
- Often more trusting, forthright and honest
- They are usually interest-based negotiators searching for a mutually beneficial result
- People get their feelings hurt, which makes them defensive

A principled negotiation:

- Has both parties with clear limits (minimum and maximum)
- Each party has predetermined indicators (before the negotiation)
- Both parties are looking for a common intersection of their needs
- Separate people from the problem
- Focus on interests versus position
- Invent options for mutual gain
- Insist on objective criteria










Each of these negotiator types has strengths and weaknesses. Push too hard and risk no negotiation being made or not push hard enough and get results that are of no value.




Pairing Negotiation Styles

When hard, soft and principled negotiation styles are paired in different ways there are four outcomes:



The most likely outcomes are:

| | Hard | Principled | Soft |
|------------|---|---|--|
| Hard |  No guaranteed winner, often a lose-lose outcome. |  The principled negotiator will set the upper limit. The hard negotiator may see this as not enough and therefore there is no guaranteed outcome. |  The hard approach will deliver a one time win, leaving the soft negotiator feeling violated. The soft negotiator will try not to have further interaction. |
| Principled |  The principled negotiator may be seen as difficult, but as there is a minimum satisfactory outcome, this the likely result. |  Both parties will meet their goals. |  The principled negotiator will try to ensure that the soft negotiator gets his minimum position. No guarantee of a satisfactory agreement. |
| Soft |  The hard approach will deliver a one time win, leaving the soft negotiator feeling violated. The soft negotiator will avoid further interaction. |  The principled negotiator will ensure that the soft negotiator gets a reasonable outcome. No guarantee of a satisfactory agreement though. |  Since the focus is on preserving the relationship, both parties may concede early in order to quickly get to an unsatisfactory agreement. |

 Soft Negotiator
 Hard Negotiator
 Principled Negotiator

To prepare for a principled negotiation, you'll need to understand the motivations and goals of the other participant. Remember that motivations and interests are different than the positions they express. Draw out ideas for ways you can ensure an objective criteria and how you can get the other party to consider new options or solutions. Be a good listener, and be prepared to offer new solutions.