

BARGAINING WITH THE DEVIL

When to Negotiate, When to Fight

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The Web site for this book is at www.BargainingWithTheDevil.com.

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MAIN IDEA

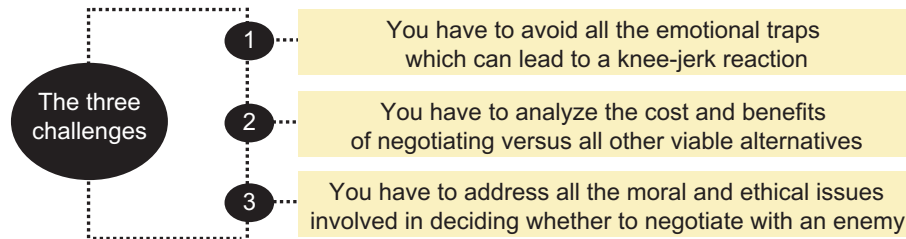
If someone does you wrong in business or in life, should you bargain with them or ignore them and go straight to warfare or litigation?

This is actually a highly strategic question and one of the most challenging issues in any negotiation. If you attempt to make a deal with the other party, you are in effect legitimizing their authority and position. For example, if a government negotiates with terrorists, then it is effectively stating the terrorists have a point and are worth speaking to in order to come to some sort of mutual arrangement. In a way, this can be viewed as a form of rewarding bad behavior.

So, should you try to resolve any and all conflicts through negotiation rather than fighting it out? The answer depends on all kinds of different factors but you should have a bias towards negotiating wherever and whenever possible. You'll increase the odds you will achieve more if you do

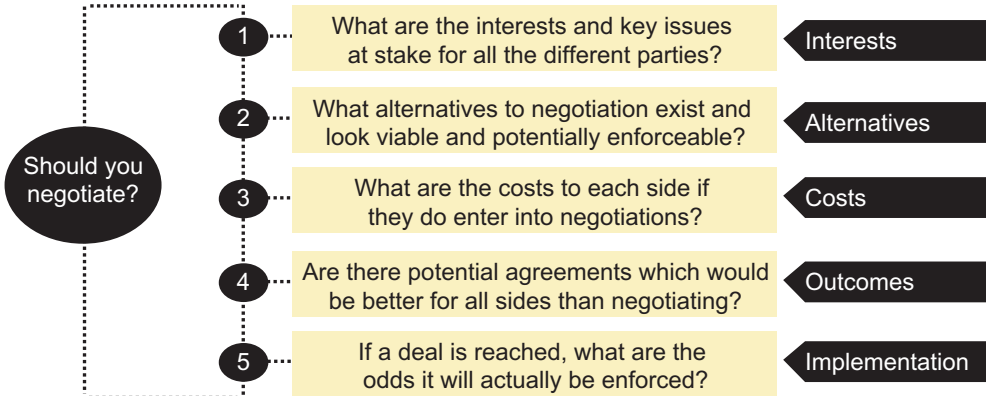
1. The three challenges Pages 2 - 5

When trying to resolve a conflict, there are generally three challenges which affect your ability to make a good decision on whether to negotiate or not:



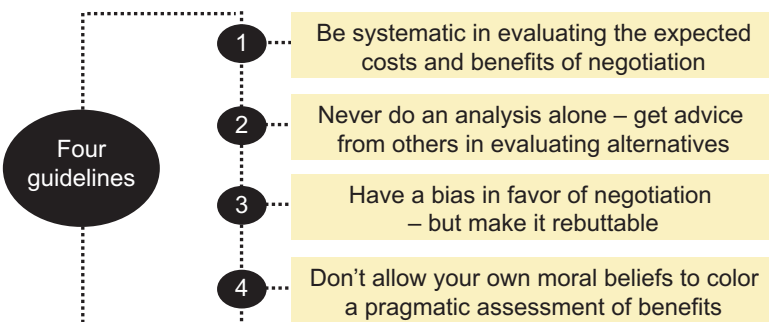
2. A framework for making a decision Pages 6 - 7

Once you understand what all the potential challenges or traps are, you're then better positioned to make a decision on whether to negotiate or not. A good starting point is to use this kind of idea flowchart as the framework for your decision:



3. Four general guidelines Page 8

Whether or not you choose to bargain with the devil always involves some form of dynamic tension between a desire to move forward and the necessity to give the other party something they don't in fact deserve. It's the conflict between principle and pragmatism. There aren't any immutable commandments which will always apply. Instead, four general guidelines you should try and keep in mind are:



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