

Negotiating 101

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Scott Walker Chairman Mitsui Seiki <http://www.mitsuseiki.com> More Content by Scott Walker

Editor's Note: This excerpt is from Rantings of a Machine Tool Salesman, a new book on life and life running a machine tool company, from former president and current chairman of Mitsui Seiki USA, Scott Walker.

Humans are social creatures. Daily interactions are riddled with negotiations with significant others, children, co-workers, and people with whom we do business. In his book *Never Split the Difference*, Chris Voss details three negotiating styles he's dealt with over the years as an FBI negotiator.

Type 1: Analyst

Analysts are methodical and diligent. They are not in a big rush. They believe that as long as they're working toward the best result in a thorough and systematic way, time is of little consequence. Their self-image is linked to minimizing mistakes.

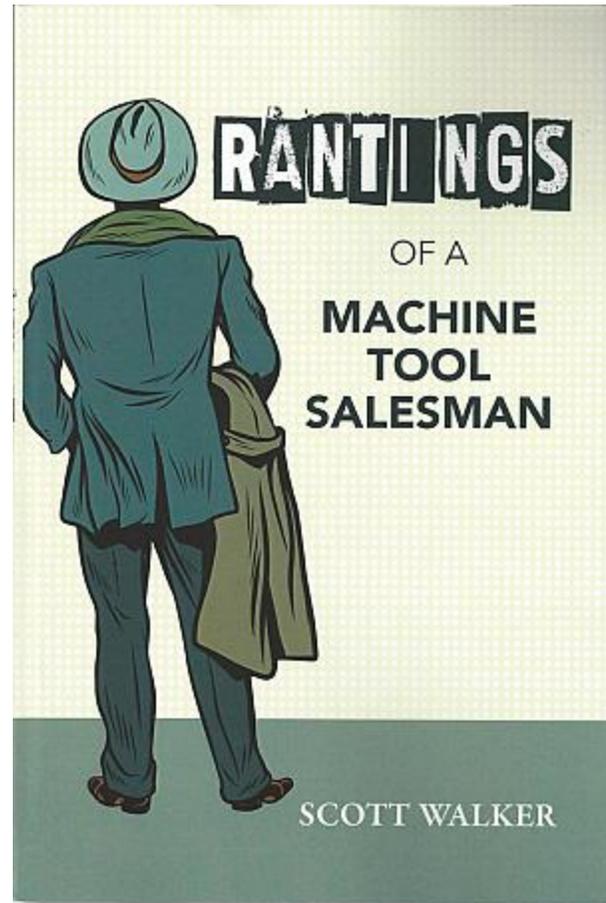
They rarely show emotion and speak in a way that is distant and cold instead of soothing. This puts people off to them without them knowing it. They pride themselves on not missing any details. They give you a piece and if they don't get a piece back within a certain time frame, they lose trust and disengage.

People like this are skeptical by nature. Silence to them is an opportunity to think. They are not mad at you when they're silent, and they are not trying to give you a chance to talk. If they don't see things your way, give them a chance to think fast. Apologies have little value to an Analyst.

They see negotiations and their relationship with you as a person largely as separate things. If you are an Analyst, you should be worried about cutting yourself off from an essential source of data, your counterpart.

Type 2: Accommodator

An Accommodator's most important focus is building a relationship. As long as there is a freely flowing, continuous exchange of information, they consider their time well spent.



Of the three types of negotiators, they are most likely to build great rapport without actually accomplishing anything. Accommodators will remain friends with their counterparts even if they cannot reach an agreement. If people you are negotiating with are sociable, peace-seeking, optimistic, distractible, and poor time managers, they are probably Accommodators.

Their approach to preparation can be lacking as they are much more focused on the person behind the table. They want to get to know you. While it is very easy to disagree with an Accommodator, be likeable but do not sacrifice your objectives. Also be conscious of excessive chitchat. If you are sitting across the table from someone like yourself, you will be prone to interactions that accomplish nothing.

Type 3: Assertive

The Assertive type believes time is money. Every wasted minute is a wasted dollar. Their self-image is linked to how many things they can get accomplished in a period of time. For them, getting the solution perfect isn't as important as getting it done.

Assertives are fiery people who love winning above all else, often at the expense of others. Their colleagues and counterparts never question where they stand because they are always direct and candid. They have an aggressive communication style and don't worry about future interactions.

Their view on business relationships is based on respect, nothing more and nothing less. Most of all, Assertives want to be heard. They don't have the ability to listen to you until they know that you have heard them first.

When dealing with an Assertive, it is best to focus on what they want to say, because once they're convinced you understand them, they will listen to your point of view. To an Assertive, every silence is an opportunity to speak more.

When it comes to reciprocity, Assertives give an inch and take a mile. They believe they deserve whatever you've given them, so they'll be oblivious to any expectations of owing you something in return. If they've made a concession, Assertives are counting the seconds until they get something from you in return.

If you are an Assertive, be conscious of your tone. You do not intend to be overly harsh, but you will often come across that way.

Using this knowledge

So how can you use this knowledge? People often fail to identify their counterparts' style. The greatest obstacle to accurately identifying someone else's style is the "I am normal" paradox. That is, the world should look to others as it looks to me.

While innocent, thinking you're normal is one of the most damaging assumptions in negotiations. We unconsciously project our own style onto the other side. But three types of negotiators in the world means there is a 66 per cent chance your counterpart has a different style from yours, a different normal.

So the next time you are in a negotiation, see if you can identify your counterpart's style. If you can do this style and understand what they are reading from you by your actions during the negotiations, it may open a new opportunity helping you both communicate better.

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