

# Notes from [Getting to YES, Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In](#) by Roger Fisher and William Ury

## 1. Develop your Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement

Developing your Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement is a way to protect yourself from making a bad agreement (compromising too much), or from holding out for too much when the alternative is a battle you can't win.

## 2. Separate the People from the Problem

Dealing with a substantive problem and maintaining a good working relationship need not be conflicting goals if the parties are committed and psychologically prepared to treat each separately on its own legitimate merits. Deal with people problems directly: don't try to solve them with substantive concessions.

The various people problems fall into one of three baskets:

### a: Perception

- Put yourself in their shoes
- Don't deduce their intentions from your fears
- Don't blame them for your problem
- Discuss each other's perceptions
- Look for opportunities to act inconsistently with their perceptions
- Give them a stake in outcome by making sure they participate
- Face-saving: Make your proposals consistent with their values

### b: Emotion

- First, recognize & understand emotions, theirs and yours
- Make emotions explicit & acknowledge them as legitimate
- Allow the other side to let off steam
- Don't react to emotional outbursts
- Use symbolic gestures (e.g. an apology)

### c: Communication

- Listen actively & acknowledge what is being said
- Speak to be understood (not to impress third parties)
- Speak about yourself, not about them
- Speak for a purpose (don't speak too much)

Overall, it is best to prevent people problems by:

- a. Building a Working Relationship
- b. Facing the Problem, Not the People

## 3. Focus on Interests, Not Positions

- Behind opposed positions lie shared and compatible interests, as well as conflicting ones
- State the problem first, before starting your answer
- Look forward, not back
- Be concrete, yet flexible
- Be hard on the problem, soft on the people

#### **4. Invent Options for Mutual Gain**

*AVOID:*

- Premature judgment
- Limiting options to be discussed
- Viewing a situation as “either/or”
- Thinking only of your own problems

#### **5. Insist on Using Objective Criteria**

- a. Deciding on the basis of will is costly
- b. Commit to reaching a solution based upon principle, not pressure