

Negotiation

By Bonnie Wooding

The “fine art of negotiation” has always been a challenge for me. I don’t know why, but the whole process has always made me somewhat uncomfortable – even embarrassed. I’m not sure why, but I presume it is a combination of being Canadian and being a woman (too polite and too nice).

Since hanging out my shingle, I have had the opportunity to learn three very important negotiation “truths” which have made the whole process a much more pleasant and profitable experience.

The first truth is that “everything is negotiable” – you don’t have to simply accept or reject what’s being offered – you can ask for something different. For example, you are in the hiring process and your prospective employer is telling you about the position - you can, if you want, let them know that you have additional skills and you would like to incorporate them into the position – ie, negotiate the position into what you want it to be. Alternatively, if you are negotiating with a hotel and the price is higher than your budget, ask if there is wiggle room on the room prices or the food. Successful people recognize that almost everything is negotiable, and that it never hurts to ask. While you may not get everything you ask for, you’ll be amazed at how often you get most of what you want.

The second truth is, unless you are absolutely certain that you will never, ever do business with or see that person or company again, negotiation should be a win-win proposition. Making the other party “lose” can have negative implications you do not want. By ensuring that everyone leaves the table content with their deal, you leave the door open for future business.

And the third truth I learned is to be proud of my “product” – to believe in the value what I am offering. When you believe what you are offering is of value, you are free to extol its virtues and praise its desirability. Nothing is more convincing than a salesman’s conviction that his/her product is the very best.

Bonnie is an Executive Virtual Assistant, who provides one-on-one support for busy entrepreneurs. Researcher, project manager, marketing & sales assistant, desk top and multimedia specialist, travel agent, mind reader and magician, she is a dedicated professional with a high level of integrity, who will competently attend to all your personal and professional matters.