

## The Drivers

In a recent article, we discussed some of the “under the table” drivers that affect people in negotiations. Among them were looking good (everyone wants to look good to someone), being fair, and power. We’ll explore some more today:

- **Being Right** – No mystery here. Many people simply can’t admit they are capable of making a mistake – or ever would.
- **Being Appreciated** - Being appreciated, being valued is of enormous importance to many in business. In a surprising study delving into factors resulting in job satisfaction, money came out 7th, while being appreciated and working with people you like were on the top of the list. I constantly see people who accept being underpaid because they feel appreciated.
- **Being Important** - You can observe this from a grade school principal, to the head of a department, to the mayor of your community. Many people get their strokes from being important. If they get that from a business situation, the deal has a good chance of going well. If they don’t, they’ll find a way to disrupt the deal. Given a choice, people will always choose a situation that feeds what’s under the table.
- **Resisting Authority** – The kid in school who resents teachers and can’t take instruction has a good chance to become the employee who can’t get along with bosses and can’t take instruction.
- **Legacy** – Legacy is a factor that usually enters late in a career. Look at our Presidents. It takes two years just to get your arms around the job. The next two are spent trying to get reelected. If reelected, the second term drifts toward thoughts of legacy, and that is reflected in speeches, in planning for the presidential library, etc. In business, we see it at the CEO level, when a Jack Welch or a Lee Iacocca is preoccupied with the legacy they will leave a company.
- **Fame** – Easily observed in the celebrity field, top businesspeople are no less susceptible to fame than anyone else, especially at the top levels. Look at Richard Branson and Donald Trump.
- **Impatience** – A common and often effective negotiation technique is simply to drag your feet, and wear the other person down. Their impatience can lead to them giving away more than they would like, just to “be done with it.”
- **Being Liked** – Everyone wants to be liked, but some carry it to an extreme. It’s my observation that salespeople are often the worst, and this often leads to cutting price, giving in on factors such as terms, free shipping, warranty, etc. A sales manager captured it nicely when he told me, “Bob, my salespeople’s greatest strength is that they are 'people-people'. Their greatest weakness is that they are “people-people”.
- **Being Safe** - Not making a mistake ... these are individuals who have a fear of “getting taken”. Security is very important, and for a reason. In many companies, getting ahead is not achieved by head-turning accomplishments, but by simply staying out of trouble – by outliving the competition. In such an environment, being safe becomes part of the culture.

A side note – these drivers are universal. When I'm on assignment in the Middle East (Oman & Dubai), even though the culture is very different, what drives people “under the table” is very consistent.

Now we're to the hard part: making those same observations about yourself. All of the drivers outlined above apply not only to the other party, but to you as well. What's under the table for you? Experience has taught that while these are merely difficult to accurately determine in another, they can be almost impossible to observe in yourself.

The truth is, if you can discover and eliminate them, you can become almost invulnerable in negotiation. Here's why: **every driver is a need, and every need is a lever for people to work you.**

If you have a need to be liked, or to look good, a savvy negotiator can use that need to work you. If you have a need to be safe and not make mistakes, a savvy negotiator can use that need to manipulate you. If you have a need to be fair, a savvy negotiator will work you. Here's what good negotiators understand: **the under the table drivers work the tactics on top of the table.**

***Burn this into your brain:*** Whenever you use a negotiation to satisfy emotional needs, you give the other party an advantage, because in negotiation, neediness makes you vulnerable. Most of the people who emerge on the short end of the stick in Negotiation are the cause of their own undoing. When they talk about it, they often point out how they were treated poorly, but when you examine the situation here's what you'll find: When they gave others an advantage, others simply took it.

Here's the cliff notes on that: **Don't use business to feel good about yourself. Use business to do business.**

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