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Book Report: “*Getting To Yes: Negotiating Agreement without Giving In*”

*Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement without Giving In* is one of the best-selling nonfiction books which was published in the year 1981. The book was authored by Roger Fisher, William L. Ury, and Bruce Patton, who were the members of the “Harvard Negotiation Project.” The book introduced a new concept of principled negotiation, instead of positional bargaining, which changed the negotiation strategies of the business world. *Getting to Yes* may have been one of the most important books in the business field, which has highlighted that negotiations should work in the favor of both parties and should not only be done on the basis of compromise.

One of the most important issue with positional bargaining is that both of the parties try to get their purpose served, without caring about the consequences and impacts of the negotiation on the other party. An important reason it does not work is that the parties become rigid about their stance and requirement, ignoring the margin of resolution of the matter. The authors have described in their book,

When negotiators bargain over positions, they tend to lock themselves into those positions. The more you clarify your position and defend it against attack, the more committed you become to it. The more you try to convince the other side of the impossibility of changing your opening position, the more difficult it becomes to do so (Fisher, Ury, and Patton, 7).

The example of positional bargaining from the book is the case of shop owner and customer, negotiating the deal of a brass dish. The customer wants to buy it at the minimum price, while the shop owner wants to sell it at the maximum price. Both parties want to make a deal; however, their strong positions hinder their ability to reach some common point.

Principled negotiation is the concept which is based on, as well as emphases the interest of the involved parties. It also greatly stresses conflict management and resolution. The very first point of principled negotiation is separating people from the problem under negotiation. The second point is focusing on the interest of the negotiating parties and not on their positions. The third point is that the negotiating parties should generate ideas and invent new option to ensure a mutual gain. The last point of principled negotiation is that the outcome should be based on objective criteria and not on the position or stance of the negotiators (Fisher, Ury, and Patton, 42).

The book has mentioned that basic human needs are the most powerful interests. If the agreement or the negotiation can ensure or increase the economic prosperity, security, sense of control and belonging, as well as recognition of the involved parties then it is a commendable deal.

The authors of the book coined the term BATNA, which means “Best Alternative to Negotiated Agreement.” The authors have explained that the composition of negotiating skills and strategies is called BATNA. It is quite important to know the BATNAs when at the negotiating table, because it can help the people know that they are agreeing on an equal deal and the negotiator is not making them agree on a position which will secretly increase his leverage (Fisher, Ury, and Patton, 50).

One of the most common tricky tactic explained by the authors of the book is deliberate deception by the use of phony facts. One party may represent a defective product as the most efficient one. The strategy of separating the problem from the person can be utilized to have a background check about the facts, before finalizing the negotiations. Another common tricky tactic is the use of psychological warfare, through personal attacks. One party may attack the confidence and clarity of mind of the other party by commenting on appearance and not maintaining an appropriate and ensuring eye contact. The strategy to overcome this is to focus on interest and not the position, by not letting the other party ruin the mood of the negotiation and presenting the point firmly (Carnevale, 2).

The most recent international negotiation is between the United States of America and China. The president of the U.S., who is not in favor of the import of Chinese products in the country, has finally ordered Google to stop selling its services to Chinese mobile company Huawei. The American side used the tactic of psychological warfare of arranging a meeting with the Chinese representative and cancelling it at the last moment. The Chinese party utilized the positional pressure tactic of extreme demands by raising the tax amount on U.S. imported goods.

In case of being provided with the opportunity to get significantly more than what is fair, one should not take it, in order to ensure the equality of both parties. One should negotiate in the case the other party is showing the interest, as well as making an effort to finalize the deal. On the other hand, one should not negotiate if the other party is using dirty tactics to increase its personal gains while ignoring one's perspective (Brett, 218). The book is quite knowledgeable and impressive and the specific part of the utilization of dirty tactics makes sense to me. Moreover, there is no part which specifically seems flawed to me.

The most important thing which I learned from the book is principled negotiation and its points. Moreover, the BATNAs and common tricky tactics are quite informative as well. I see myself using the techniques in professional life by specifically focusing on separating people from the problem and not getting influenced by the dirty tactics. I would surely recommend the book to others, so they can learn about BATNAs, common dirty tricks and principles of negotiation to make their deals by negotiation and not by compromising.

Works Cited

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Carnevale, Peter J. "Strategic time in negotiation." *Current opinion in psychology* (2019).

Fisher, Roger, William L. Ury, and Bruce Patton. *Getting to yes: Negotiating agreement without giving in*. Penguin, 2011.