

Deal World Rule #14 – Emotions

As I prepared my client for a negotiation, I stressed the importance of keeping calm, cool and collected. We then walked into the conference room and the opposing negotiator immediately threw a stack of papers in my face and told me how the deal was going to go down. I turned purple and punched him in the head. Looking back on it now, I wish I hadn't turned purple.

Emotions are an integral part of the human experience and a critical part of Deal World. Use emotions to your advantage, don't ignore them.

At the studio, this is how we deal with emotions:



Awareness vs. Experience. Know the distinction between awareness and experience. Being aware of the emotions at hand allows you to use them for gain, while “experiencing” them can make you turn purple and switch your brain off. A trick to get into the mindset of awareness is to adopt the curiosity of a young child who repeatedly asks -- why? For example, when I got the papers thrown in my face, had I been curious versus competitive, I wouldn't have been drawn into (i.e., experienced) the idiot's negative emotion. If I looked at his behavior with curiosity, I would have wondered what things must have happened in his life to make him such a repressed individual? I would have calmly said -- “Are you done, because we need to get started on this negotiation?” This would have allowed me to use his embarrassing behavior as a lever with him (or at least with his team, if he was truly crazy).

Simply approaching your negotiations from logical frameworks and rational perspectives is not a complete way to prepare. You also must be aware of the energy and emotions connected with the deal as well. Failing to take into account the emotional dimension will leave a gaping hole in your strategy and may cause you to miss out on points of leverage and opportunity.

Are you taking into account the emotions surrounding your negotiations? If so, congratulations. If not, start today.

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