8 Bad Negotiation Assumptions
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Are You Limiting Your Negotiation Results?

As we wrote in our book, The Procurement Game Plan, Dr. Soheila Lunney and I identified the procurement negotiator’s worst enemy as the set of assumptions he or she has about negotiation circumstances. Often, your assumptions alone may prevent you from taking the negotiating actions that would produce more beneficial deals for your organization.

So, what are the things that procurement negotiators assume? Here is a sample of the assumptions that are often not true and might prevent you from achieving optimal negotiation results.

Bad Assumption #1: A certain supplier is the only one available or capable of providing a certain product or service

Bad Assumption #2: Your organization is too small to qualify for preferential pricing and terms from a certain supplier

Bad Assumption #3: The price that the supplier quoted is the lowest they are willing to offer

Bad Assumption #4: The supplier will not provide the information (e.g., its profit margin percentage) that you would like to have

Bad Assumption #5: The supplier representative with whom you are speaking has decision-making authority

Bad Assumption #6: There is no way to influence supplier pricing if market prices are rising

Bad Assumption #7: Fixed pricing is always the lowest cost, or best, option

Bad Assumption #8: The only way to compel a supplier to reduce its price is to say that you’ll simply do business with another supplier who you consider to be equivalent

You’re probably in the midst of a negotiation right now. If so, evaluate your situation to determine if you are making these assumptions. If you are, try to determine whether your assumptions are true or false before letting them negatively affect how you negotiate.

Spotlight On Professional Development Opportunities

Have your suppliers figured out how to neutralize your negotiation strategies? Most supplier salespeople go through negotiation training at least annually. And, unless you've been just as diligent at improving your negotiation skills, your chances of getting the best deals from your suppliers are very slim.

But you can quickly get the modern procurement negotiation strategies and skills you need to get the best deals in today's environment by completing the NLPA's online course "Powerful Negotiation For Successful Buying." And, as a member of the NLPA, you have preview access to the first lesson of Powerful Negotiation For Successful Buying (a course that counts towards SPSM® Certification) at no-charge as part of your membership benefits.

So, start negotiating better deals from your suppliers today. Log to the members' area of the NLPA site at:


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