

Who Do We Work With?

I work with companies who are frustrated with the results of their customer/supplier contract negotiations. Clients hire me when their relationships start to suffer in a misguided pursuit of short-term profit. What my clients really want is more value and better outcomes for their end users and customers.

Today, customer-supplier relationships are global, complex and interdependent. The skills your negotiation team used to negotiate yesterday's contracts simply will not work to negotiate tomorrow's deal. Without a trusting relationship, companies include stiff penalty clauses in their contracts, engage in hardball negotiation tactics and fight endlessly over price reductions. The result? Deal erosion over time for both the customer and the supplier, meaning both companies are getting a whole lot less value from the deal than expected.

Your company is not alone. Almost half of the companies surveyed by the IACCM did not believe their deals delivered the expected value. Why? Business people are using antiquated negotiation tactics in modern negotiation situations. And, most business people are significantly underprepared to negotiate in today's global supply chain. Many companies have not recognized that contract negotiation skills are a critical competency in an increasingly global supply chain.

My clients face some typical challenges. Are any of these true for your Sales, Procurement and Contract Management teams too?

- **“Value Leakage” or “Deal Erosion”** (shrinking margins and increased costs coupled with increasing sense of frustration with their customer-supplier). No matter what your team does, it seems that your company is not meeting margin goals, impacting bottom line profitability. Everything your team has done up to this point hasn't made much of a difference.
- **Lost (or about to lose) long-term, and important customer-supplier** during the contract negotiation process due to poor skills or overly aggressive negotiation style. This is usually due to a lack of planning, experience or in-depth contract negotiation training on the part of your negotiators.
- **Poor customer-supplier peer-to-peer (“2 in a box”) relationships** causing a strain on productivity. When things don't go as planned, people at both companies start to blame each other, only to further escalate the tension between the two companies.
- **Newly formed team** tasked with negotiating complex agreements with long-term customers-suppliers. People bring a diverse set of skills, competencies and expectations (of themselves and each other). The lack of cohesion comes across as a weakness at the bargaining table.

- **Inefficient negotiation processes** that delay closing deals. Deals get “tossed” to others in the company, like the legal team. Without the proper handoff, issues get re-discussed (wasting time and making the other side mad), or worse, people just put off dealing with it until they have time (and they never do have time).
- **Teams with subpar negotiation skills** or a team with a range of skills from sophisticated to beginners. People think that their skills are better than they really are and use personality styles to measure success, not the profitability of the deals. This causes tension within the group and no one stands out as a mentor to guide less experienced negotiators along.
- **Negotiators who are “outgunned” or “overpowered”** during the negotiation sessions. Power imbalances are perceived more often than they exist. Yet, when people take a “one-down” position at the bargaining table, your company’s profitability and relationship suffers.

No matter which of these situations your team finds itself in, I can help.

My clients all share one trait: They all wanted a “good deal” and a good working relationship.

I’ve worked with a range of companies from tech start-ups to Fortune 500 companies. I’ve taught collaborative communication and contract negotiation skills to thousands of business people at organizations such as Microsoft, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and Esterline Corporation, as well as various professional organizations. *(Would you like to see a list of clients I’ve worked with? Follow this link.)*

Your company does not have to choose between profitability and good working relationships.

Your company can close more deals more profitably, and it can improve its relationships with its customers and suppliers.

I don’t work with everyone. Engagements can only be successful with clients who are willing to be responsible for working towards their own success. Your team will be most successful in working with me when the team can commit to:

- **Transforming their skills** to better negotiate complex, long-term business relationships
- **Improving their company’s profitability** by learning to negotiate “Total Deal Value” or “Total Cost of Ownership” issues
- **Working more collaboratively** with their customers or suppliers
- **Changing negative mindsets** that prevent individuals from improving their negotiation skills. *(If you’d like to know more about these mindsets, follow this link.)*

- **Welcoming a fresh approach** to negotiating contracts, and working more collaboratively with their customers and suppliers.

Now that you know the kinds of clients I work with, the issues we help resolve, and what our clients need to do to ensure their success, email Jeanette Nyden to schedule an appointment.

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