Sometimes buyers use tactics to gain advantages in negotiation at the seller’s expense. Even if your mindset and approach are win-win, you need to know how to counter any tactics that might be thrown your way.

**SPLIT THE DIFFERENCE**

**Buyer Says:** “Just meet me in the middle and let’s call it a day.”

**Description:** Buyer asks you to meet them in the middle, even though the middle may not be fair for you.

**Response Strategy:**
- Beware of the emotional appeal of showing “good faith” by splitting the difference.
- Don’t cave.
- Search for a better solution.

**ANCHORING**

**Buyer Says:** “We’re looking to spend no more than $500,000 for this.”

**Description:** Buyer shares a target number, such as a budget cap, to anchor the bargaining range on the low side.

**Response Strategy:**
- Go first with price. Don’t wait for them.
- Find out whether it’s a real number or a ploy.
- Remind the buyer that the process to get to final concessions.

**TEMPER TANTRUM**

**Buyer Says:** “I can’t believe this!!!”

**Description:** A sometimes-planned, heightened emotional reaction to price or a specific term in the proposal in order to evoke a response from you.

**Response Strategy:**
- Don’t get rattled. Remain professional.
- Suggest taking a short break.
- Get back to objectives and possibilities.

**OUTLAST**

**Buyer Says:** “This is too much for now. Then I’ll be out. Let’s re-engage in 2 months.”

**Description:** Buyer tries to unbundle a solution but assumes all will be the same price when it isn’t.

**Response Strategy:**
- Make sure to respond that it won’t work immediately to address the issue.
- Note on proposals that price assumes “this solution and volume” and changes will affect overall price structure.
- Engage discussion to work out appropriate pricing.

**CHERRY PICKING**

**Buyer Says:** “I know I said our initial order would be 5,000 units with 4 components, but we’ll just need this price first.”

**Description:** Buyer tries to unbundle a solution but assumes all will be the same price when it isn’t.

**Response Strategy:**
- Make sure to respond that it won’t work immediately to address the issue.
- Note on proposals that price assumes “this solution and volume” and changes will affect overall price structure.
- Engage discussion to work out appropriate pricing.

**RED HERRING**

**Buyer Says:** “We’re really concerned about this huge issue.”

**Description:** Buyer distracts the negotiation by introducing an unimportant issue to the seller, but making it seem important, so they’ll get a concession from you when they drop it. Then you are not inclined to stand firm on more important issues.

**Response Strategy:**
- Suggest dealing with issues separately.
- If something else is important, don’t lose steam to negotiate when you get to it.

**GOING, GOING, GONE**

**Buyer Says:** “They’re bringing along our colleague, Darth CFO.”

**Description:** Buyer introduces a total cost-late in discussions to pressure price, change the agreement, and reopen closed issues.

**Response Strategy:**
- Bring your own bad cop.
- Don’t blink or look intimidated.
- Stick to objectives, possibilities, requirements, and alternatives and focus on outcomes.
- Wait it out. Stay present. Don’t rush.

**COOL COR BAD COP**

**Buyer Says:** “Out west.”

**Description:** Buyer conveniently “forgets” what they agreed to and re-engage in 2 months...

**Response Strategy:**
- Avoid the issue altogether. Keep and share notes after all meetings.
- If you agreed to it, you agreed. Stick to that if it’s important.
- Get back to objectives and possibilities.

**THEATER OF THE ABSURD**

**Buyer Says:** “We’ve reviewed our agreement. We want your first born child, too.”

**Description:** Buyer asks for the sun and the stars knowing it’s absurd, hoping to then appear reasonable by lowering demands that are still, actually unreasonable.

**Response Strategy:** Reverse direction by giving them an example of why what they are asking for is silly.

**STICKER SHOCK**

**Buyer Says:** “It costs how much?”

**Description:** Buyer appears to be shocked with the price. It could be an unorchestrated response.

**Response Strategy:**
- Wait for theatrics to die down.
- Ignore their flinch and ask why it seems high to them.
- Often their reasoning is faulty.

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