

## Negotiation Exercises

Throughout the course you will participate in role-playing negotiation exercises. You will be assigned a role, partnered with one or more other students, given a case with instructions and confidential information, and asked to prepare and negotiate. When cases are handed out ahead of time, you should come to class prepared to negotiate. In general, we will have a greater range of experience to draw on and a richer discussion if you prepare individually, rather than with a partner or in a study group. Think of it as contributing to a bigger sample for our collective research project and controlling cross-case influences. As a group, you are dependent on each other to suspend disbelief and animate the exercises vividly and plausibly and provide a rich base of experience for us to draw on.

As a general rule, you should try to do as well for yourself as you can in these exercises. As you will see, what this means can be problematic. In many of the exercises you will receive confidential information. You may reveal as much or as little of this information (or any other information) as you wish in the negotiation. **Under no circumstances should you show another party your confidential information during a negotiation.** Other negotiators must believe you, not a piece of paper. This rule reflects that character of actual negotiation, since there is seldom an external authority that can exert the influence that your instructions do. It would be a rare case where you could convince someone about a preference or a constraint simply by showing them a piece of paper.

These games are designed to be self-explanatory. Please follow the instructions carefully. If the instructions for a multi-round game say that you and your partner must reveal offers simultaneously, without discussion, one round at a time, do not leave after abruptly presenting your counterpart with a signed list of offers for 20 rounds (as a student once did). Please observe schedules or time limits when they are provided. Beyond this, within the letter and the spirit of the exercises, it's up to you how you negotiate.

It's not hard to defeat the purpose of these exercises. You can consult others who have played an exercise, deviate from the rules, or collude with your counterpart against the game. You might be able to locate published accounts of some games. As a tactic, however, such practices are self-defeating. They undercut the richness of experience, deaden discussion, and distort outcomes. We trust that you will avoid them to the extent that you can.

Finally, as explained earlier, preparation is essential to your success in this course. Since much of the learning in this course occurs in the negotiation simulations, poor preparation will negatively impact your own experience. More importantly, it can be very frustrating for others if you are not adequately prepared.