

# Negotiation Skills

## OBJECTIVE(S)

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Relate and sympathize with an impersonal concern/position/situation
2. Form an argument to defend a position/concern/situation
3. Utilize negotiation strategies to obtain an ultimate objective – perhaps to the detriment of lesser objectives

## REQUIREMENTS

**Level:** 5-12 Grade(s)

**Time:** 45-90 minutes

### Materials Needed:

- character strips (see appended sheet at the bottom of this activity)
- Negotiation Tactics handout

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## PROCEDURE (Please use additional space as needed)

### I. Lesson Introduction/Activation of Prior Knowledge

This lesson can act as an introduction to negotiation tactics or follow a previous introduction. Students are exposed to strategies of diplomacy and reminded of them through an activity. This lesson may also be used to reinforce what students already know about Position Papers, or to introduce Position Papers to students who may already have a familiarity with negotiation tactics.

If you have not already done so, take some time at the beginning of the lesson to go over the tactics listed on Handout 3/1. Discuss with students situations in which they might want to use these tactics, and what is effective about each one as well as possible drawbacks. Students should be familiar with various negotiation strategies.

### II. Activity

Hand out character strips to students. Each student gets one. Allow them to read their new character and remind them that they need to assume these roles fully. In order to establish this, ask your students to write a 1-page description of their character adding further details, and/or draw a picture of the character. Older students should focus on developing the character's background, illustrating key moments (should there be any) during their character's life, and describing life-style, quality of life, dreams and achievements.

Divide students into small groups of 4 to 8 students each. Assign the following jobs:

- Recorder
- Share-out person

Students share their character with the other students in the group, reading descriptions and/or displaying pictures.

Then dramatically tell the students that they each are in the hospital with a fatal disease. They are all in need of a new kidney immediately or they will die. However, there is only ONE kidney available for each small group. The students now must decide who gets the kidney. In other words, within their groups they must *negotiate* among each other to eventually decide on the kidney's recipient. The kind of group dynamic that emerges is left entirely up to the students.

Suggest that the students use their character descriptions to launch the arguments each will use to obtain the kidney for himself. For students who have gone over position papers, point out that the character descriptions can be used as a kind of “position paper”. For those who have not gone over position papers, this point can be illustrated at the end of the activity.

### III. Closing/Wrap-Up

Once time is up, the students of the group, and/or the student speaker, will share with the class who they chose as the recipient of the kidney and offer reasons why the group did so. Most likely, different negotiation styles will emerge out of each group. Discuss the skills that were used (and ask the students to examine those that were not) Reflect on which skills were effective, which skills were not so effective, and which skills that went unused that may have been effective in retrospect. Finally, try to establish the social structure and/or governing type of each group. Was decision-making and negotiation led by an iron fist or, was it more laid-back with a leader or mediator emerging out of discussion democratically?

### **OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES**

#### Future In-class Follow-Up for Teachers

This activity can be done in a variety of ways, playing on countless themes of political, social, or economic concern. For example, in a course on politics, this activity can be used to illustrate the good and bad points of certain types of political systems – each group order thus being recognized as a kind of political order. In a course on economics – and for ambitious teachers – play money can be handed out to the students for the purposes of buying/selling positions and arguments. A social course could focus more on which persona – if the activity is to be repeated with different classes – succeeded in becoming the recipient of the sole kidney. Teachers could ask students why they think a certain persona ‘won’ so often and offer reasons why another persona, who perhaps did not ‘win’ as often, could have been just as qualified to receive the life-saving kidney.

#### Homework

For an at-home assignment relating to this activity, teachers may want to ask students to step into the role of a diplomat who is representing a country with very specific reasons for acting on a certain issue. The students may be asked to write a short essay describing the biography of their assigned diplomat. This can be coupled with another assignment to research the position of a specific country. The student may then be able to compose his own position paper for the purposes of an in-class Model UN simulation when he may also be asked to assume the diplomatic persona/representative of his particular country.

*Note:* This homework assignment can be assigned in full, for high school students, and in parts for middle school or younger students.

Some pre-made persona-slips to use during the activity.

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| Girl, age 8, average student, single parent home, Latina   |
| Grandfather, age 70, four children, ten grandchildren, Caucasian   |
| Man, age 65, single, no children, Nobel prize winner for science, South Asian  |
| Woman, age 30, married, one child, stay at home mom, African American  |
| Boy, age 12, athlete, average student, two parents, Caucasian  |
| Woman, age 25, rap star, multi-millionaire, unmarried, no children, Latina   |
| Man, age 28, unmarried, one child, successful writer, Caucasian  |
| Man, age 40, married, no children, television producer, Latino   |
| Girl, age 10, autistic, piano virtuoso and painter, two parents, Caucasian   |
| Boy, age 18, average student, average athlete, two parents, Caucasian  |
| Man, age 50, divorced, three children who are all very bright, professor, Middle Eastern   |
| Woman, age 40, married, two children, NGO volunteer and community activist, African American   |
| Woman, age 35, unmarried, no children, up-and-coming actress, Asian American   |
| Girl, age 16, average student, average athlete, just broke up with boyfriend, South Asian  |
| Grandfather, age 80, two children, four grandchildren, doctor, Asian American  |
| Grandmother, age 75, one child, no grandchildren, millionaire, Caucasian   |
| Great-grandfather, age 100, ten children, twenty grandchildren, of royal African descent and the subject of a much anticipated biography |
| Man, age 37, married, three children, average income, long history of kidney disease in family, Middle Eastern                           |
| Boy, age 13, guitar player in a rock band, two parents, good student, Latino   |
| Boy, age 17, promising writer and poet, two parents, African American  |
| Man, age 26, multiple medical problems, parents deceased, writer, Caucasian  |