

Six Steps for Negotiation (adapted from Johnson & Johnson, 1995)

1. Describe what you want.

What is your side of the disagreement? What do you want? Be assertive (not aggressive) and keep your statements specific and brief.

2. Describe how you feel.

Start with “I feel,” “I’m frustrated,” or another “I” statement to help you accurately express what you’re feeling about the situation.

3. Describe the reasons behind your wants and feelings.

Share your thoughts and reasons about *why* you feel like you do and want what you want.

4. Listen to the other person’s perspective and summarize your understanding of what the other person wants, how the other person feels, and the reasons underlying both.

Give others the opportunity to express themselves the same way that you did, listening closely without interrupting. Listen without judging them or their side of the disagreement, and then do a perception check to make sure that you understood (refer to the listening/paraphrasing strategy from Lesson 5, Activity 5):

- Describe/paraphrase what you think the other person is feeling and thinking
- Ask if you got it right
- Avoid expressing approval or disapproval at others’ feelings/positions

5. Come up with three possible solutions to the conflict that benefit everyone involved.

When creating a list of possible options, try to do the following:

- Remember that there isn’t just one right answer, and don’t be afraid to get creative.
- Wait until all the ideas are on the table before making judgements about any of them.
- Remind yourself that solutions don’t necessarily have to be “the less for you, the more for me.”

Note: While keeping an open mind is important in negotiation, if you know something is illegal, inappropriate, will hurt other people, or would violate your principles, you can and should say no. Compromise/collaboration isn’t possible in those situations.

6. Together, choose the wisest course of action and state the agreement verbally.

Everyone involved should agree that the decision is fair and verbally agree that they will stick with it.