



# Manager as Negotiator

*David A. Lax*

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## **Manager as Negotiator** David A. Lax

This fine blend of Harvard scholarship and seasoned judgment is really two books in one. The first develops a sophisticated approach to negotiation for executives, attorneys, diplomats -- indeed, for anyone who bargains or studies its challenges. The second offers a new and compelling vision of the successful manager: as a strong, often subtle negotiator, constantly shaping agreements and informal understandings throughout the complex web of relationships in an organization.

Effective managers must be able to reach good formal accords such as contracts, out-of-court settlements, and joint venture agreements. Yet they also have to negotiate with others on whom they depend for results, resources, and authority. Whether getting fuller support from the marketing department, hammering out next year's budget, or winning the approval for a new line of business, managers must be adept at advantageously working out and modifying understandings, resolving disputes, and finding mutual gains where interests and perceptions conflict. In such situations, *The Manager as Negotiator* shows how to creatively further the totality of one's interests, including important relationships -- in a way that Richard Walton, Harvard Business School Professor of Organizational Behavior, describes as "sensitive to the nuances of negotiating in organizations" and "relentless and skillful in making systematic sense of the process."

This book differs fundamentally from the recent spate of negotiation handbooks that tend to espouse one of two approaches: the competitive ("Get yours and most of theirs, too") or the cooperative ("Everyone can always win"). Transcending such cynical and naive views, the authors develop a comprehensive approach, based on strategies and tactics for productively managing the tension between the cooperation and competition that are both inherent in bargaining.

Based on the authors' extensive experience with hundreds of cases, and peppered with a number of wide-ranging examples, *The Manager as Negotiator* will be invaluable to novice and experienced negotiators, public and private managers, academics, and anyone who needs to know the state of the art in this important field.

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