



# Getting to Yes

By Roger Fisher and William Ury

Fisher, Roger and William Ury. *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*, 3rd ed. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2011.

Born from the business sector and based on the work of the Harvard Negotiation Project, “Getting to Yes” presents a framework for conflict resolution that has been widely applied in a variety of contexts – both academic, business and personal. This framework, called “Principled Negotiation”, is a useful set of strategies which can be applied to help address and resolve the conflicts that occur when working with multi- or inter-disciplinary research teams.

## Principled Negotiation

- (1) Separate the PEOPLE from the Problem.
- (2) Focus on INTERESTS, not Positions.
- (3) Invent OPTIONS for mutual gain.
- (4) Insist on using objective CRITERIA upon which to base agreement.

**1. Separate the PEOPLE from the Problem:** It is important to separate the people from the problem at issue to avoid layering emotions onto the resolution discussion. Not only does it protect the relationships involved, but it also allows the parties to see the substance of the issue more clearly. The authors suggest individuals should be able to express their emotions and should acknowledge the emotions of the other side and seeking to understand their source. Only when the emotions have been disentangled from the issue at hand can a mutually satisfying agreement be reached.

**2. Focus on INTERESTS, not Positions:** Each party takes on their position in a conflict based on their underlying interest. Principled negotiation encourages the parties to define the problem in terms of each party’s underlying interest. When this occurs, it is often possible to find a solution which can satisfy both party’s interests.

**3. Invent OPTIONS for mutual gain:** This step in principled negotiation involves brainstorming potential solutions without premature judgment and encourages multiple solutions to be considered. The parties should identify mutual interests and seek solutions that benefit both sides.

**4. Insist on using objective CRITERIA:** When each party has different interests which themselves are in opposition, negotiation should rely on objective criteria to evaluate solutions. These objective criteria should be mutually agreed upon.