

NEGOTIATION PLOYS

01

ABSENT AUTHORITY

A guide to the tactics and ploys that may be encountered when negotiating. Find out what they are and how to react- or how to use them yourself!

What it is

A ploy to take an issue 'off the table' and control the agenda. The other party states that they don't have the authority to negotiate about, or concede on, an issue. Also called 'third party authority.'



How to spot it

You may be trying to set the negotiation agenda and the other party declines to include a topic, saying:
 "Head office won't let us" or "It is not company policy".
 Alternatively, the other party may suggest that no further concessions are possible:
 "I see your point of view, but the suits on the 34th floor have said we cannot agree to that"



Why is it used?

Control, and to say "no" without affecting the speaker's personal relationship. It has the effect of preserving the other party's personal credibility while ensuring that they get what they want. This is because the party with authority to agree to what you want are absent. They are typically "in New York" "on the top floor" or "at head office". They are never in the room.



How to respond

When setting the agenda with the other party, make sure that the stakeholders at the table have authority to negotiate what is on the agenda.

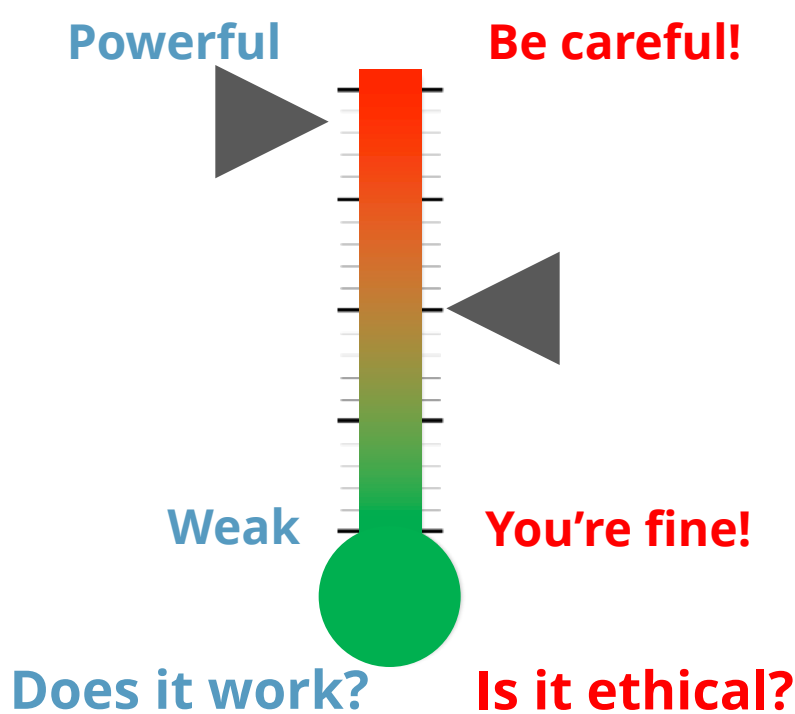
If the person with authority is "in New York", "on the top floor" or "at head office" arrange for them to be available on videoconference or phone in.



Tip

Try to avoid the other party acting as intermediary. They can easily say "I checked for you and they still said 'no!'"

Should you use it?



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