

Empowered employees find that they have greater authority within their individual jobs. However, since most jobs today require collaboration with others, people discover that they must be skillful in negotiating mutually beneficial arrangements in order to successfully complete their work. Thus, individuals who in an earlier time would have been *told* how to work together and share resources must now negotiate those collaborations. Since these individuals seldom have power over the people with whom they work, they cannot force agreements or command behavior. Instead they must persuade, bargain, and show how collaboration serves the interests of participants.

The frequency with which negotiations are employed in the workplace—both formally and informally—makes it a career-enhancing skill at every level, especially as people move up the career ladder to managerial positions. Individuals who know how to settle disputes, enlist people in collaborative efforts, and bargain effectively with outside entities such as customers, suppliers, and regulators are of greater value to their companies than are employees who are either uncomfortable with negotiations or lacking in negotiating skills.

Do you have the right attitude to become an effective negotiator? No idea? Not sure? Then take the self-assessment in Exhibit 1-1. It asks you to rate yourself on a number of attitudes, personal preferences, and behaviors that contribute to negotiating effectiveness. The ratings range from 1 to 5, with 1 being not at all like you and 5 being very much like you. Example: If you think that “I always prepare for important work” doesn’t describe you at all, you should put a 1 in the “Never describes me” column.

**E** **xhibit 1-1**  
**Self-Assessment: Do you have the makings of a good negotiator?**

Read each question and reflect on how accurately it describes you. Indicate your view with the appropriate number score. You’ll find scoring instructions at the end.

	1 Never	2 Rarely	3 Sometimes	4 Frequently	5 Always
I always prepare for important work.					
I know what’s important to me and what is not.					
I try to understand the views and interests of others.					
I am most satisfied when everyone comes away a winner.					

**Exhibit 1-1 continues on next page.**

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**Exhibit 1-1** continued from previous page.

	1 Never	2 Rarely	3 Sometimes	4 Frequently	5 Always
My reputation at work is that of a creative problem-solver.					
The people I work with regard me as trustworthy and fair-minded.					
I enjoy working with customers and with people in other departments.					
I am a patient person when it comes to solving problems.					
I spend as much or more time listening as speaking.					
I know how to determine what is a good deal or a bad deal for me.					
I find the motivations of other people interesting.					
I'm not opposed to compromising on some things when it results in a greater good.					
The people I work with would say that I'm assertive yet reasonable.					
I would rather speak with a customer who has a complaint than work in my office on a report.					
I'm not easily intimidated when dealing with others.					

**Exhibit 1-1 continues on next page.**

AMACOM Self Study Program  
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**Exhibit 1-1** continued from previous page.*Scoring instructions:*

1. Total each column.

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2. Add the five scores to get your total score. Write that total score here: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Divide your total score by 15 (the number of questions) to obtain your average score. Write your average score here: \_\_\_\_\_

If your average score is 4 or 5, congratulations. Once you learn the relevant skills and develop them through practice, you're likely to be an effective negotiator. If you scored 3 or 4, the same goes for you. Just work a bit on attitude, preferences, and behaviors. If you scored below 3, you'll carry some extra baggage into your future negotiations. For instance, if you indicated that you are easily intimidated, or if you described a preference for working in your office instead of talking with a customer who has a problem, you'll have more trouble negotiating effectively than will a person who answered the opposite to these questions—other things being equal. Fortunately, attitudes, personal preferences, and behaviors are not cast in stone. Once you are aware of them and understand how they limit your success, you can do something about them. Consider the late Alec Guinness, arguably one of the great actors of the late twentieth century. Guinness was plagued in his early years by stage fright to the point that it hung like a dark cloud over his future as a thespian. Once he recognized the impediment this problem posed to the career he hoped to follow, he managed to overcome it.

So, if you didn't score well on the test, take heart as attitudes, preferences, and behaviors can be changed from within if we recognize that they prevent us from achieving something we desire.

## THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS

Many of the routine things we do at work every day can be described as work processes. A *work process* is a set of interrelated tasks that aim to produce a defined output. The loan department in a bank, for example, follows a process for handling loan applications, from gathering all the relevant information, checking the applicant's credit rating, deciding whether to approve the loan, notifying the applicant of the bank's decision, and (assuming that the loan is approved), meeting with the customer to get all appropriate signatures and to provide required disclosures. Other enterprises, both services and manufacturing, have analogous processes for getting work done.

The business of negotiating is likewise a process of sorts, and it is useful to have a mental overview of the process as one learns and masters its details. Exhibit 1-2 is graphic view of the negotiating process, seen as a linear series of phases:

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