



# Interest-based Dialogue and Problem Solving

Professional Development Session  
Senior Leadership Team

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# Interest-based Dialogue and Problem Solving

An open exchange of interests related to conflicting or differing ideas in which parties feel equally heard, respected, and unafraid to voice dissenting opinions for the purpose of reaching a mutually comfortable resolution.

- Starts with Trust
- Not Personal, Not Negative, But Uncomfortable

## Advantages

- Early problem identification
- Better problem solving
- Healthier relationships and higher morale
- Increased commitment
- Improved productivity
- Personal growth and insight
- Teaches us to listen
- Opportunity to verbalize needs and fears
- Teaches flexibility
- Opens our eyes to new ideas
- Teaches us patterns of behavior
- Leads to better solutions

## **Interest-based vs Positional**

- Positional
  - One solution
  - Divide the pie / Zero-sum Game
- Interest-based
  - Multiple solutions based on mutual interests
  - Grow the pie

## **Adversarial Assumptions**

- For me to win you must lose
  - Therefore, we compete
- To help you is a sign of my weakness and will hurt me
- My power comes from opposing, criticizing, and beating you

**Ignores the value of relationship**

## **Interest-based Assumptions**

- All parties have the right to exist
- All parties have legitimate interests
- Dialogue can enhance relationship
- Solutions are durable
- Mutual gain is possible

**Values relationship**

## Interests

Concerns

Wants

Needs

Desires

Fears

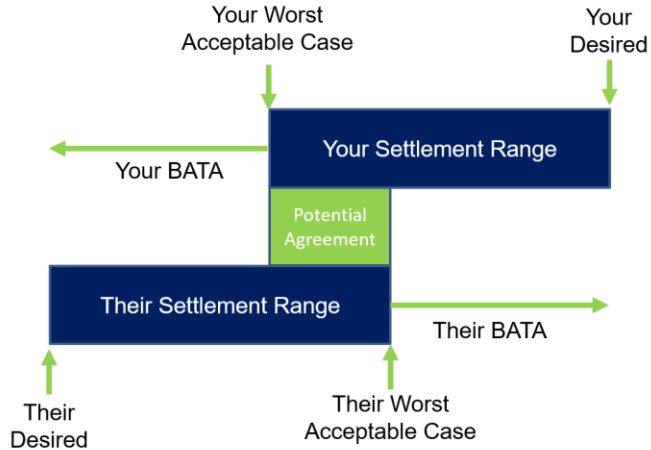
Relative to a problem or issue, which can be solved or resolved by a variety of solutions some of which will be acceptable to both parties.

## Elements of Negotiation

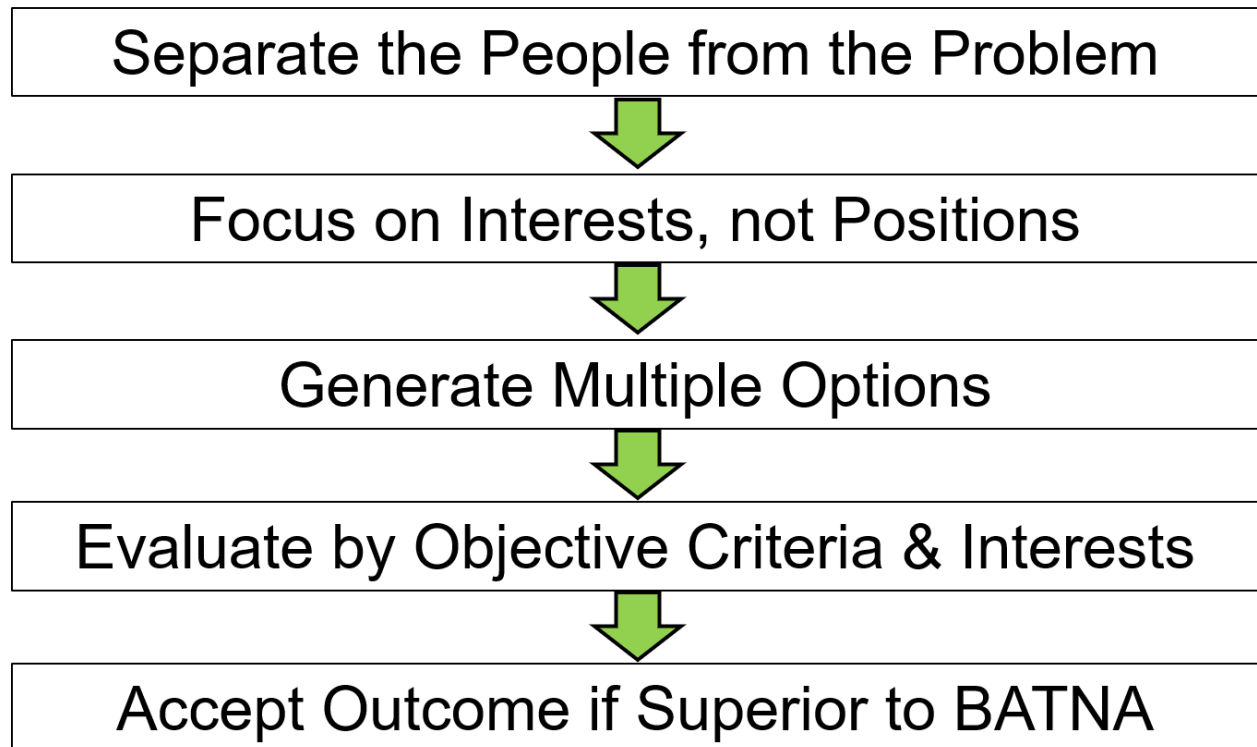
	POWER	RIGHTS	INTERESTS
Resources Required	Usually high Time, Money, Stress	Generally Costly Time, Money, Stress	Time and Talent
Outcome Satisfaction	One sided: One winner, One loser	Mixed: Not satisfied to highly satisfied	Both interests must be satisfied or no agreement
Compliance	As long as power is applied	Until a better opportunity presents itself	Very durable
Quality of Relationship	Often destroys	Oneupmanship	Strengthens Mutual respect



**BATNA**  
**B**est  
**A**lternative  
**T**o a  
**N**egotiated  
**A**greement



### Interest-based Principles



## Barriers to Interest-based Solutions

- Single answers
- Assuming a fixed pie
- Their problem is theirs
- Failing to get information
- Too much emotion
- Jumping to conclusions
- Staying in the box
- Fear of risk

*Because no matter how hard a conversation is, I know that on the other side of that difficult conversation lies peace. Knowledge. An answer is delivered. Character is revealed. Truces are formed. Misunderstandings are resolved.*

-Shonda Rhimes