Network Perspectives

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PINpoints

PROCESSES OF INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATION

In this issue:

Training and Teaching in International Negotiation Processes

GIGA

German Institute for Global and Area Studies
Leibniz-Institut für Globale und Regionale Studien

Contents

COLOPHON

PINPoints

PINPoints is the biannual publication of the Processes of International Negotiation Program (PIN).

PIN is a non-profit group of scholars and practitioners that encourages and organizes research on a broad spectrum of topics related to international negotiation. The PIN network includes more than 4,000 scholars and practitioners of international negotiation. The organization is presided over by a Steering Committee, which organizes its many activities and edits the PINPoints.

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Paul Meerts

Editorial

PINPoints 48 is a monograph on training and teaching in international negotiation processes, based on training and cultural experiences of members of the Processes of International Negotiation (PIN) Program and its associates from the Program on International Negotiation Training (POINT).

PIN education is different from other modes of learning, as it aims to connect skill-training with substance. In practice, this content focuses principally on political and diplomatic negotiations: bargaining between states, within international organizations, and among representatives of political and military groups. In short, it relates more to public-sector negotiations than to private-sector (business) negotiations.

The approach of both PIN and POINT is very much in line with teaching in political and social sciences and international relations, both inside and outside of academic settings. We add a training element to academic teaching and try to use the most advanced techniques towards that end. For this reason, the reader will find quite a bit of content on online training in this issue. In this COVID-19 year, distance learning has been crucial; although it cannot completely compensate for in-person instruction and discussion, it will surely continue to be part of our field in the future. Appropriately, the first contribution in this issue is a detailed report by Ida Manton and Frans Schram on two Zoom meetings chaired by Schram in May of this year, organized by the POINT Steering Committee (the "troika") in order to gather lessons learned about online training.

Twenty-eight PIN and POINT members – plus some associates – have contributed concise reports in which they highlight their experiences in face-to-face and/or online education. Additionally, this issue concludes with a special contribution by I. William Zartman (PIN's chief scientist and peer reviewer of this issue), who reviews some recent literature on international negotiation training. The reports are arranged thematically:

1. Online Training (Manton and Schram, Borbély, Marchi)
2. Face-to-Face Training (Albin, Schram, Sikharulidze, Vasilescu, Zartman)
3. Approaches to Training (Boudewijn, Meerts, Rosoux, Smolinski, Szepesi)
4. Tools in Training (Anstey, Faltas, Salamé, Schüssler)
5. People in Training (Bass, Van den Berg, Erdmann, Kesting, Manton, Sigurðardóttir, Wynen)
6. Culture in Training (Baber, Crump, Faure, Matos, Vuković)

We are aware of the overlap between these six categories: some contributions could be listed under more than one heading. However, we felt it would be helpful to group contributions together in this way in order to help the reader discover the linkages between them. To provide some context to the authors and their articles, short abstracts are given below.

While we have tried to attract as many experts as possible from across the world, negotiation research and training remains – after more than half a century of modern negotiation analysis and education – a largely European and North American affair. This is a pity, as culture impacts and influences the perceptions and experiences of trainers and researchers. After all, nobody is culturally unbiased, not even in academia. Nevertheless, we hope readers will find this unique issue's contents inspiring, thought-provoking and, above all, useful. At this point, we extend our gratitude to everyone who took part in the discussions leading up to this publication, and we would also like to thank the staff of the German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA) for all the work they have put into this and previous issues of *PINPoints*.

Abstracts (in alphabetical order)

Cecilia Albin (cecilia.albin@yahoo.se) illustrates the importance of informal but organized face-to-face discussion in a congenial setting for producing a reasonable plan for Israeli–Palestinian cooperation and a peace settlement two years before the Oslo meetings. The effort shows how semi-official people representing their side in the dispute but pursuing a common purpose can come to an agreement without betraying their interests.

Mark Anstey (mrk.anstey@gmail.com) demonstrates the usefulness of case studies as learning tools in negotiating deadlocks. It is important to make participants in serious conflict situations aware of the value of negotiation as an instrument to overcome emotional and material divergencies. Case studies can help temper perceptions, recognize reality, overcome the stereotypes of the present and the narrative of the past, deal with entrapment, and shift the commitments and the positions of the parties in order to shape a common future.

Will Baber (baber@gsm.kyoto-u.ac.jp) teaches negotiation skills in Japan with an awareness of the demands of the cultural setting. In order to get the content across, the trainer must use specific measures to develop students' confidence in class participation, build authority by developing rapport, and display the contextual relevance of the presentation, utilizing locally based simulations.

Tony Bass (basstony@gmail.com) writes about EU presidency training for civil servants from the EU bureaucracy and EU member states. As he states, "post-game analysis […] strongly focused on operational practicalities" is of the utmost importance in EU training sessions. Civil servants have a lot of fears, and these are often related to personal issues: "Identifying what underpins these fears […] along with offering personal 'hints and tips'" ensures successful workshops for international civil servants.

Hans van den Berg (hansvdberg@me.com) takes his summer school as a case for analysis: "Most important in setting up these educational and training programs is to ensure that participants build genuine relationships with each other and have fun." The editor agrees with Van den Berg that next to skill and content, networking is of the utmost importance, and notes that such a summer school program is also a public relations event for the host country.

Adrian Borbély (aborbely@em-lyon.com) comments on distance learning: "I had a taste of online teaching; I am still not a fan but I now have a better perspective on the issue: I would not cook it myself, but if it is the only dish available, I will eat it."

Rob Boudewijn (info@robboudewijn.eu) stresses the importance of preparing well for multilateral simulation games. To that end, he designed the "Diplomatic Paper Manual," entailing that participants address ten points on issues such as content, agenda-setting, relationships, and strategy and tactics.

Larry Crump (l.crump@griffith.edu.au) describes the path his training experience in Japan took and identifies unique cultural challenges: "Discussions that would easily develop and flow in the United States were not forthcoming in Japan. Experienced Japanese managers seemed unwilling to express their views unless they consulted their colleagues first." Crump suggests creative solutions to these roadblocks.

Daniel Erdmann (mail@worldmediation.org) tackles the challenges of creating an effective and easy-to-grasp training in mediation and conflict management. In so doing, he argues that training should be understood as a process of personal development and describes what such a training should focus on.

Sami Faltas (samifaltas@gmail.com) discusses the importance of simulations, noting, "A Confucian saying goes: 'I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.' Confucius probably never said this, but he should have."

Guy-Olivier Faure (go.faure@gmail.com) reports to us on the evolution of his trainees (and trainings) in China over the past three decades: "As disciplined and dutiful people, they played along. […] As smart people, they understood there was a lot to learn from doing. […] As 'modern' people, they accepted the idea that learning could also be entertaining."

Peter Kesting (petk@mgmt.au.dk) tells us about his experiences running The Negotiation Challenge (TNC), a competition between students from leading universities worldwide. He concludes that an effective negotiator is one who manages his or her emotions: "Emotional teams were good, but often not the top teams."

Ida Manton (ida.manton@gmail.com) focuses on gender: "I hope that my investment in the capacities of […] women's negotiation skills will increase their direct participation in peace negotiations. […] Gender equality cannot happen without both men and women making the effort."

Francesco Marchi (marchi@essec.edu) advises us on how best to prepare for online training. Though he views face-to-face training as preferable to distance learning, he recognizes certain advantages of online training, as long as it is delivered effectively.

Joana Matos (joana@matos.is) relays two anecdotes about working with African and Armenian trainees. In one case, she found students' expectations from a training did not align with her own; in the other case, she was reminded that cultural norms are not universal, and it is best to err on the conservative side when it comes to physical contact.

Paul Meerts (pwmeerts@gmail.com) has a provocative training approach whereby practice enlightens theory and vice versa. His way of training international negotiators, be they civil servants or university students, is based on learning by doing. Every exercise he uses during his trainings can be found in a workbook that is handed out to each participant and contains enough food for thought for a week-long workshop. Please also see his contribution on this in *PINPoints* 47.

Valérie Rosoux (valerie.rosoux@uclouvain.be) asks herself (and us) how we should train people in the aftermath of mass atrocities. Her comments are linked to those of Mark Anstey. She underlines four major lessons, advising us to (1) begin the training with brainstorming, (2) incorporate the individual experiences of the participants, (3) be prepared to deal with strong emotions, and (4) be aware of the importance of timing: when to deal with which issue or event.

Léna Salamé (lenasalame@gmail.com) discusses training in transboundary conflict management. She describes the role plays she has conducted with parties involved in interstate water conflicts, whereby negotiations are sometimes played out by third parties and observed by the relevant actors for the latter's edification: "[Water managers] need strong, process-oriented, technological knowledge [but also] a certain set of negotiation skills."

Frans Schram (fransschram@hotmail.com) deals with face-to-face training of non-state (armed) groups: "Using in-context exercises and examples can serve to ease the acceptance – and probably comprehension – of imparted theory and underlying principles, but may also limit out-of-the-box thinking and reinforce unhelpful biases."

Rudolf Schuessler (rudolf.schuessler@gmail.com) uses simulation games – some of them taken straight from the real world – with his university students, and describes here how their negotiation processes develop: "The students relished the realistic feel of the [EU] simulation. They even studied the personalities of the leaders whom they would represent." He also wrote an article on this topic in *PINPoints* 36.

Aldís G. Sigurðardóttir (a.sigurdardottir@utwente.nl) analyzes the role of deception in negotiation processes. She concludes that students who used deceptive tactics lacked effectiveness, as others lost trust in them as negotiators. The liars did not prosper: in negotiation, being reliable pays off.

Tariel Sikharulidze (tariel.t.s@gmail.com) emphasizes the importance of the very smallest details in negotiations. The big themes and strategies have little meaning if the exact wording of an agreement is not carefully monitored. There is no way to convey the importance of this in conceptual terms, so Sikharulidze provides a memorable example.

Remigiusz Smolinski (remigiusz.smolinski@hhl.de) tells us about The Negotiation Challenge, also mentioned by his colleague Peter Kesting. Together they intend to launch a negotiation competition for practitioners: a World Championship in Negotiation based on a Negotiation Competency Model developed by Smolinski and Yun Xiong in 2020.

Stefan Szepesi (stefan@negotiationandpublicservice.co) brings a new element into our overview of lessons learned, referring to the usefulness of applying martial arts – in this case, aikido – to creating more awareness of handling negotiation processes: “Physically experiencing [negotiation] techniques instead of only rationally applying them is an inspiring complement to traditional training.” In this way, Szepesi provides an interesting companion philosophy to using Sunzi to understand negotiation strategy and tactics.

Dragos-Christian Vasilescu (dragos.vasilescu@tuwien.ac.at) opines that negotiating should not be about acquiring something, but instilling peace of mind that your options were explored: “In my experience, negotiators who have already agreed on the core issues in past negotiations experience less stress, which increases their overall satisfaction with the outcomes.”

Emmanuel Vivet (emmanuel.vivet@aviation-civile.gouv.fr) stresses the importance of contextual examples in training negotiators: “[A good example] enriches the course by showing students […] how negotiations can connect with history and the tide of time.”

Siniša Vuković (sumosika@yahoo.com) discusses the impact of culture on international negotiation processes, invoking Eduard Herriot. While recognizing that “simulating culture is nearly impossible,” Vuković finds great utility in the game of Barnga, which brings participants’ emotions to the surface, as they are confronted with conflicting rules and regulations, unable to speak a common language to put an end to the escalating miscommunication.

Serge Wynen (serge@emetaprise.com) argues for the importance of clarifying the objectives, purpose, and expectations of a training before participants delve into a workshop: “Approaching each negotiation workshop with more clarity of intent and purpose enables us to role-model the attitudes, behaviors, and words that build confidence in negotiation.”

I. William Zartman (zartman@jhu.edu) asks his university students to act as negotiation teachers for middle-school children in Washington, DC. The university students manage to gain the children’s trust and have learned in the process about the kinds of conflicts these children experience at home, at school, and elsewhere. Zartman declares the program “a real win–win,” as “the student-teachers learn as they teach.”

■

I ONLINE TRAINING

Ida Manton and Frans Schram

Challenges and Opportunities Emerging from a Pandemic: Online Negotiation and Mediation Training

Introduction

Being part of POINT (Programme of International Negotiation Training), a network of like-minded professionals, has led us to reflect on how to best gather and share our cumulative knowledge and experience regarding the changes we have all faced due to COVID-19. To that end, our network, led by the "troika" (Paul Meerts, Frans Schram, and Ida Manton), initiated discussions and debates on how to handle the changes in our field. Twenty out of twenty-five POINTers participated in the first Zoom meeting. The follow-up virtual meeting clarified the debate and deliberations over how we can best use the lockdown time to acquire new skills and advance our future classes technologically. Several POINTers put their ideas into writing and sent their visions to the troika, foremost among them John Hemery (John.Hemery@cpds.uk) from the Centre of Political and Diplomatic Studies (CPDS), of whose extensive contribution several key aspects have been incorporated into this report. Others who similarly shared their lessons learned were Hans van den Berg and Mark Young (markyoung@gmx.net). Non-PIN/POINTers who participated – and delivered valuable oral contributions – were Hugo Crul, Claudia Garcia, and Avi Goldstein. We are deeply grateful for everyone's thought-provoking contributions, and for those that were unselfishly shared with all of us over Zoom. We hope to do justice to the discussion by summarizing the main points here with the intention of better equipping us all for the future and recommending ways to use this interruption to create constructive, creative, and progressive improvements in our new virtual classrooms.

Keeping in mind that people are facing hard choices and sustaining huge losses during these devastating times, the goal of this issue is to provide a meaningful contribution by sharing knowledge and strategies not only amongst ourselves, but also with other aspiring or practicing trainers, lecturers, and facilitators in the fields of negotiation and mediation. Though some of us declared years ago, "I am not doing my trainings online," that is no longer a choice. Now we must focus on how to benefit from this new reality by recognizing the positive aspects of it and even discovering new ones, along with ascertaining the less productive ways in which our profession may be changing. Whether this period of teaching through technology has permanently changed our field or not, one thing we all agree on is that exploring new ways of teaching will update and sharpen our skill sets and improve our performances, as it equips us with invaluable flexibility when it comes to different mediums. For some of us, the greatest potential in the post-pandemic world lies in optimizing our effectiveness by deftly blending traditional, face-to-face training with these virtual tools.

Some of us have noticed that participant engagement in trainings has improved given the online setting; others have heard unexpected feedback on how useful such seminars are in times of crisis on a very personal, human level. We hope you will find this compendium of early observations, bolstered by years of traditional training, at least thought-provoking, and we hope to inspire you to provide us with feedback we can build upon in our upcoming seminars.

Our contribution follows the training phases, so let us start by discussing the changes and adaptations that must be made to prepare for your next online training.

Preparation

It is essential to choose a platform that both the participants and the trainer can easily navigate and feel comfortable with once the event starts. Our experts have used the videoconferencing tools (VCT) and other virtual tools[1] listed below and found Zoom the most flexible platform so far, notwithstanding security concerns. Other platforms were also mentioned, but not many lecturers had the experience needed to compare Zoom with platforms such as WebEx, Jitsi Meet, Skype for Business, or Google Hangouts. We had a more elaborate discussion about Microsoft Teams, as we have realized it is widely used for academic purposes at various universities and academies, places we are traditionally invited to hold lectures and seminars. Microsoft Teams is more demanding than Zoom, and unless the participants have used it prior to your training, you should plan for additional time to clarify the organization and technical demands.

1 For a comprehensive list of distance-learning systems, repositories, platforms, and applications for online and offline teaching solutions, see: https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse/solutions.

Big Blue Button (bigbluebutton.org) has been especially helpful in conducting interactive multilateral negotiation simulations online, enabling participants to share the screen while amending the negotiated text. This tool requires that the organizing party have an IT person preparing all breakout rooms and groups in advance. The same can be achieved with Zoom, but Big Blue Button offers higher security.

WhatsApp provided the most accessible, fastest means of enabling breakout discussions and individual and group feedback. WhatsApp can be a great backchannel and bring an added dimension to a simulation exercise.

Klaxoon.com offers an innovative and helpful suite of collaborative tools. (Currently in French, with subtitles; soon available in English. Three-month free trial available.)

GoToTraining (gotomeeting.com/training) offers comparably useful tools.

In a separate presentation on learning management systems (LMS), our member Stefan Szepesi advised that one possible consideration next to price and user-friendliness should be General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliance. Trainers are only beginning to come to grips with the best uses of these systems. In his view, the two biggest obstacles are how to morph classroom design into an online version, and how to ensure that technological capability is not the lens through which content is designed. Szepesi argues that one should reason from student impact to pedagogy to design to technology. LMSs help create and manage online content in an organized and structured way. They offer a variety of features and help users share more content in various formats – organizing it so that participants have a good overview – and they can be used as a planning and preparation tool for the trainer. At this stage, we will not recommend a particular LMS but urge our colleagues to look into the various options, as we expect LMSs to be used much more frequently in post-COVID trainings, online and blended courses, and regular educational and development programs, as remote learning accompanies social distancing.

There are a few things to consider regarding the hosting and training team. The need for a second trainer/colleague to act as co-host during the online training is greater than before; having someone to whom you can assign particular tasks (in the realms of content, technical aspects, process, etc.) may prove indispensable. It is advisable to make him/her the host when needed (e.g. when your internet connection is weak and you dropping out would terminate the whole meeting). Alternatively, you could make one of the participants co-host. The technical host can inform participants in advance (and at the relevant point in the session) when particular documents need to be opened. Some trainers recommend having support faculty and co-trainers available (one person per eight students).

Write out a detailed course flow for both your participants and your training team, including timing, location of the meeting, materials provided, the role of the co-host, and any possible challenges. Obviously, having previous experience with the particular platform can help you predict possible obstacles. Alternatively, consult with colleagues who have recently used the platform.

Breakout rooms can be scheduled in advance, with pre-assigned pairs or groups. Using certain platforms, confidential instructions for individual roles or delegations can be pre-loaded in the breakout room. Instructions by separate e-mail are deemed too slow and clunky, though useful when/if working with less technically savvy audiences (or trainers). It can be helpful to have two screens available at the same time: one for online communication, and the other for whiteboarding or note-taking (perhaps even a touch screen, especially if you are used to working with that technology).

Regarding the content and what participants can expect within the given timeframe, it is important to send all materials in advance along with a welcome video if possible. Make sure that along with your workbook you send a short bio of the training team, so participants have a chance to “meet” the trainers prior to the online experience. Introductory videos on how to use the course’s tools could be distributed in advance.

Conducting the Training

Logistics

Now, your classroom looks different. Our colleagues note that virtual backgrounds greatly add to the trainer’s professionalism and protect his/her privacy. Some platforms offer poor resolution, though, and having a bad background or one that does not handle movement well might be more damaging than not having one at all, so it might be advisable to choose a blank wall, which will simply go unnoticed.

As everyone can enter your computer with a simple "share" command, be careful of what you might accidentally "screen-share" on your computer. Close everything on your computer, then open only the documents you will need. The quality of the cameras (both participants' and facilitators') makes a significant difference to the sense of engagement. Always have a WhatsApp (or alternative, such as Viber) backchannel, especially for emergency communication between host and co-host. Also, be aware that your participants will use some of these backchannels for bilateral negotiations (what we used to refer to as "corridor work"), and make sure you discuss with them the best option, so they do not end up using too many channels, which can be overwhelming. Unlike in the traditional classroom setting, you will not be able to observe these interactions, so make sure you ask the right questions at the debrief session to learn what was agreed upon in the bilats (and how).

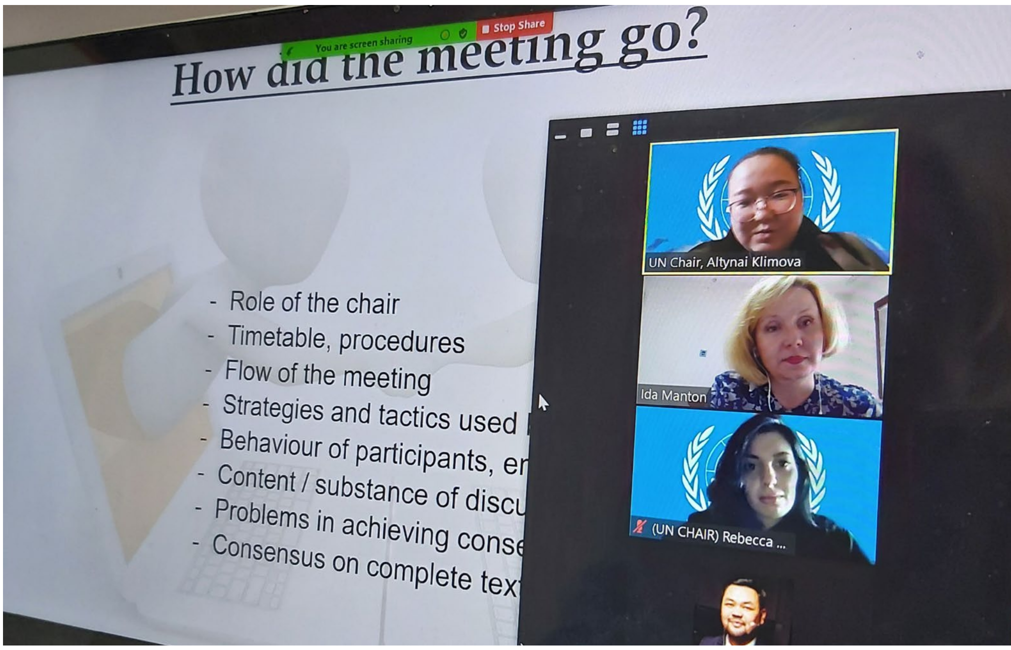
Communication

Ask participants to switch their cameras on, so you can see their faces. Also, advise them to use their hands when speaking and adjust the camera accordingly (do the same as trainer). More visibility of arms, hands, and gestures conveys at least some of the body language missing online. One of the things we find challenging to compensate for when conducting the training online is reading the messages hidden in body language, especially as some participants will turn off their cameras at times, which creates a blind spot for gauging the effect of what you are saying, instructing, or sharing. A code of visual signals would enable participants to respond to prompts or questions without unmuting. Some platforms have integrated such a feature, and if you use one lacking this capability, agree upon the basic signals such as agree, confirm, raise a hand, request to take the floor, etc.

Content and how we pass it on

Not all of the content has to be shared synchronously over Zoom. As we are looking for ways to break up the time in the classroom in order to have various ways of transferring information, now we have to find ways to be playful with different media messaging. It is best to limit the amount of online interactive sessions you have with the group, so as to prevent "Zoom fatigue." This can be done by dividing the material into portions participants can go through in between sessions, e.g. watching videos (things they need not do together in that shared time slot). Mixing content helps sustain momentum: analog and digital, video clips, live flipchart work on screen, peer-to-peer interaction. Case studies, issued in advance, present opportunities for open discussion of what has worked well in a negotiation and what might have gone wrong, where, and why.

At the beginning, it is crucial to have an activity/icebreaker to get people engaged and comfortable with the setup and the group, especially if your seminar extends over a few days and participants will have to practice teamwork, building alliances, and integra-



Ida Manton conducting the first Model OSCE in Kyrgyzstan, October 2020
© Ida Manton

tive approaches. Actually, our experts' advice is to do something playful at the beginning of each module (e.g. improvisational theater). Preparing short videos of the dry theory bits in advance, with any helpful graphs and illustrative images built in, is also recommended. Where possible, short video clips of the protagonists in the given case can help bring the negotiation to life and perhaps illustrate behavioral points.

Example: Record short videos with a focus on examples of the topics you want to discuss, and send them to students in advance. Plan short meetings with small groups of students to discuss the topic of the videos and present some questions. Then send students out with a personal or group assignment, to be followed up by their input and the facilitator's feedback. A short clip with general feedback can be recorded and students can subsequently engage in peer feedback.

The simulations will take more time, so plan for that; if you do not have more time, an alternative to simulation can be to issue the instructions to the relevant parties for a bilateral (or multilateral) negotiation, asking participants to identify common and diverging interests and work out what the respective sticking points might be along with where common ground might be found.

At the end, to make online trainings and meetings more diverse and interactive, consider including tools such as Kahoot!, Mentimeter, Poll Everywhere, or Nearpod (for inspiration, see: https://lindsayannlearning.com/7-free-online-discussion-tools/).

Time has changed now that we are virtual

Although it seems that trainings online are devoid of the usual complications – no missed flights or hotel booking problems, for instance – and you can be in your new "classroom" in just minutes, teaching this way is, in fact, much slower: some trainers claim about twice as slow as it is face-to-face.

Under the new circumstances, conducting a full-day simulation is difficult. For one thing, it may just be too much screen time, as before or after your training there are other meetings, or you are catching up with family or friends.

You might use long breaks to provide brief individual feedback, if needed or in the plan. Individual sessions and lecture-style addresses need to be shorter and interspersed with breaks and/or feedback rounds. Courses, in general, need to be short: three to four hours at a time. Scheduling three- to four-hour sessions on successive mornings has worked well.

Some were able to sustain more hours in a row than others: ninety-minute sessions, followed by half-hour breaks, made an eight-hour course day possible for digital natives. In a long session, try to get people engaged physically by having them stand, move, and stretch from time to time, along with giving their eyes a rest from the screen. What was previously a coffee break that represented a great time to interact, meet the other participants, and exchange business cards is a screen-off break now, so it is best not to give participants questionnaires or evaluations to fill out during the break.

Debriefing and Feedback

To stimulate discussion, the trainer might want to encourage participants to provide peer-to-peer feedback to complement her/his points. S/he might make more use of the private chat option to give feedback, something we cannot afford in a classroom. Also, during plenary discussion, some people are more inclined to offer written observations. This would also help the trainer sequence, select, and group questions and thus better structure the debriefing, especially if s/he has an additional trainer/co-host.

The concept of a blackboard/flipchart is still essential, and most platforms allow for electronic versions, either by using a blank PowerPoint slide or other (virtual) whiteboard. To be able to jot down important points or questions, it may be best to keep the old-school teacher's tools in your new virtual classroom if you are used to them and can adapt them. Many students learn by visualizing and memorizing your notes.

In some groups, the disparity between active and passive participants in the discussions was more pronounced than before. If that is due to peer pressure (or reticence) and results in people staying silent, it might be necessary to cold-call individuals, to keep things moving forward, and to ensure that participation is not limited to the more confident and/or knowledgeable few, especially if you need to grade them. Online training comes with a risk of "losing" participants. Setting short tasks might help fill the time usefully and engage everyone.

Online negotiation training provides participants in a breakout session with the unique opportunity to share the recorded negotiation and send it to the facilitator for subsequent feedback. Trainers could also share the recording with other breakout rooms, or with the plenary, or with other participants for them to watch later and draw their conclusions and do their comparisons. That might prompt participants to ask themselves questions like: Why did I make these concessions? What else could I have included in the package, but did not? What other alliances were possible that I did not explore? Was it the personalities, their mandate, or my inflexibility that caused some relationships to not be as constructive as they could have been?

Feedback might need to be more prescriptive, with questions to participants provided in advance. Whether one-on-one, or to a delegation of two to four, it could be provided confidentially during an exercise via side-chat on WhatsApp or Viber. However, that will be a very short, tweet-like interaction, as the trainer has to manage breakout rooms, allow participants to rejoin if the connection was lost, or deal with other technical issues. If there is a need or request for deeper discussion, you can schedule a separate meeting and address things thoroughly. In some groups, you might find it beneficial to use online tools for anonymous feedback (e.g. mentimeter.com).

Once the training is over, continue to be engaged after the formal closing and stick around to chat with those still online. Welcome the questions that were not asked during the course. Be the last to leave the meeting.

Challenges, Recommendations, and Remedies

During this forced distance-learning period, our trainers experienced a few reoccurring issues. Based on these experiences, we have drawn up some recommendations for future online and/or blended negotiation courses.

How do we build trust and rapport online?

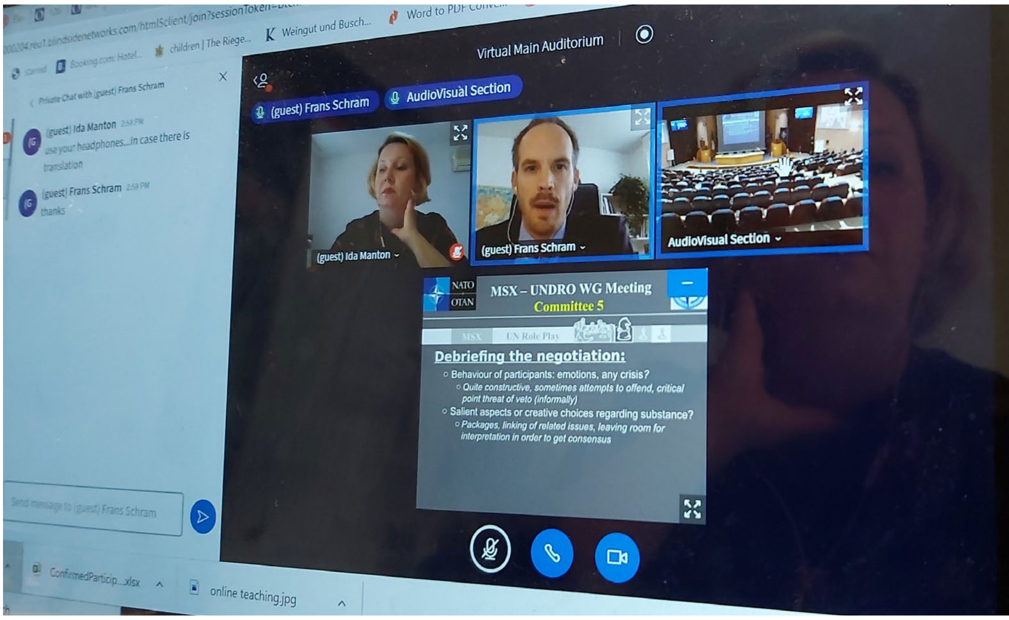
- A short welcome video distributed in advance (with the Zoom login details, course schedule, and materials) helped to generate a sense of trust and connectedness.
- An informal start could help, twenty minutes before the official start. Encourage early joining to enable individual greeting as people arrive, as in real life. Connection comes before content.
- An ice-breaking opening session, perhaps ten or fifteen minutes, can help to generate a personal, collaborative atmosphere (something personal from each individual, not something from a CV, such as presenting a favorite object or painting in their home).
- Group size matters; it is important that participants feel safe in their learning environment. A safe learning environment has to do with not only the technology, but also the atmosphere in the group.
- Try to appear confident about conducting trainings online and act as if you have been doing this for quite a while now. After all, you are presenting the same content as before the pandemic.
- Among the remaining questions that we leave to individual improvement depending on style and experience are: How can you improve the facilitative approach online? How can you further facilitate the connection between participants and trainer/s? How can you foster a true Socratic dialogue?

How do we improve online communication and mitigate its flaws?

- Introductory videos on how to use the tools relevant for the course should be sent in advance.
- A code of visual signals enables participants to respond to prompts or questions without unmuting.
- To reduce the danger of misinterpretation, be more explicit.
- Set very clear rules for the meetings (e.g. mics off, camera on).
- How about creating a videoconferencing tool specifically dedicated to negotiation training?
- Try to have two hosts, one checking the chat board, as it will be difficult to follow when there are chats going on at the same time while people are talking, especially if you are supposed to check the chat board during the lecture.

Opportunities and further thoughts

We held our first network meetings on Zoom. We had to. We knew it was the only way. Before the lockdown, we had considered how we could hold a network meeting, but were unsure it would ever happen, as such a meeting is simply too costly and trainers' schedules too divergent. While it is a wonderful asset that our members are widely spread geographically and well traveled, that makes our meetings difficult. A meeting has to be planned and organized, and the likelihood of holding such a meeting without the necessary budget is very low. Zoom transcends all of that and allowed us to have the discussions without the burden of organizing a whole event, which requires resources and time. In this digital environment, it might actually be possible to build more community.



Ida Manton and Frans Schram, NDC Senior Course 136, October 2020
© Ida Manton

Digital is here to stay, and it is going to be part of how we do negotiations in the future. It is of added value that participants and students experience online sessions firsthand in the training. Virtual negotiations should be taught virtually. With the right rules and lines of communication, things could move a lot faster and more satisfactorily. As parties get more accustomed to doing things digitally, they are far more likely to schedule a short digital meeting. Before, you might have considered leaving certain points to a later stage or not approaching them at all, but now some barriers have been removed.

In the digital setting, you actually have more opportunities to provide personalized responses. As participants can record their online sessions, you can then watch them and provide concrete feedback. However, this increases work pressure and adds working time. Project budgets will, therefore, need to reflect the fact that a lot more structure is needed compared to face-to-face training, including preparation and advance distribution of materials and all the work afterwards.

While we recognize the need to optimize the “inverted classroom,” to blend face-to-face and online learning and make the most of both synchronous and asynchronous tools, many trainers are still hoping to go back to “normal” – that this phase will be seen as a short intermission and that, once the pandemic is over, we will be back in the classroom. Maybe some aspects of teaching via technology have made permanent changes to, or altered the expectations of, negotiation training. We hope many good things will come out of this blend; we might find that exploring new ways of teaching will update and sharpen our skills and performances in a way that lets us easily move between mediums whenever required.

■

Adrian Borbély

Taking the (Forced) Dive into Teaching Negotiation Online

Until a short time ago, I was a hardcore opponent of the idea of teaching negotiation online. Then came COVID-19 and, suddenly, I had no choice. In the past few months, I taught my first two, fully synchronous, master's-level courses at a business school, from the "comfort" of my bedroom, through the Zoom platform. Here are a few things I learned from this experience.

Negotiation can be taught online. I am not saying it is "remotely" as fun, but it is feasible. This observation may offer opportunities (e.g. to reach scattered crowds) but also threats (the risk of automation of part of our class time, no more travel, etc.). Although interactions are limited (or different, as some would say), our inductive method (case preparation and implementation in breakout rooms, debriefing with the entire group, PowerPoint-supported lectures) can be applied as is.

Can we teach all of negotiation online? Probably not, I would say, as I found it difficult to address the finer, behavioral aspects of our discipline from a distance. I adapted my course to avoid those questions and focus instead on the main concepts and strategic aspects of different negotiation settings. I limited the incursion into multilateral negotiations and chose not to run simulations with more than six actors, because the online format makes it difficult to organize speech among many actors and encourage informal exchanges.

The online format also impacted my debriefings, which I found were more directive. I asked more precise questions and occupied more space than I would usually in a physical classroom. I missed my whiteboard/paperboard – though it should be noted that Zoom offers a whiteboard option that works great when one has a touch-screen computer or tablet.

I used Zoom (as it was imposed by the client) but there are several available platforms. What do we need from an online platform? The tools I used most were screen-sharing (for my PowerPoint presentations) and breakout rooms (for simulations, group work, and team preparation). Beyond a touchscreen, I strongly recommend having a second screen in front of you for better organization (one to view the students, one for class material).

In my online classes, I tried using case studies rather than simulations for group reflections. I had been developing a few of those before the crisis. I also used regular simulations, by sending every student all the roles and asking them to discuss the scenarios in small groups from different perspectives (meta and each role). Students were able to come up with great insights about what would constitute the most interesting aspects of the negotiation.

All around the world, we encourage our kids to taste before deciding they do not like certain foods. I had a taste of online teaching; I am still not a fan but I now have a better perspective on the issue: I would not cook it myself, but if it is the only dish available, I will eat it.

■

Francesco Marchi

Negotiation Training in Times of COVID-19: The Online Turn

In spite of a rather common belief of many practitioners, negotiation techniques and methods can be studied and taught, and I have spent the past ten years of my career training EU officials, diplomats, public officials, managers, and students in this field.

However, negotiation is a human activity in which thousands of intangible parameters play a paramount role in driving success or failure: the emotions, body language, tone of voice, and posture of the participants, in addition to the physical environment in which negotiations take place. When training people using simulations and role plays, it is necessary to invest a lot of energy in creating exercises that are sufficiently realistic by taking into account the aforementioned parameters and limiting the feeling of artificiality. Participants need to practice negotiation in order to learn how to gain the trust of their counterpart, how to master their emotions, how to deflate a conflict, and how to manage the logistical aspects of a negotiation. Presence and human contact are not merely sufficient but necessary conditions for learning to happen.

For these reasons I have always been convinced of the necessity of doing trainings in a classroom with a nice blackboard, comfortable breakout rooms, and a lovely coffee break. I have been solicited many times to invest my energy into developing online courses but I was always reticent to the very idea.

But in life, as in negotiation, you are not always in full control of the context in which you operate and there are some turning points that will upset your forecast and dramatically limit your margin to maneuver. And this was just what happened when I was forced in winter 2020 to cancel all planned trainings in Brussels and elsewhere in Europe because of the COVID-19 crisis. At that point in time, I had no alternative but to start figuring out how to switch to an online training methodology if I wanted to survive as a trainer and teacher in these stormy times.

© Pixabay/Gerd Altmann

After some initial doubts, I started designing an online training seminar on negotiation skills for European Commission officials, bearing in mind some important principles for any negotiation itself: generate and cultivate trust, increase strategic predictability, clarify objectives and expectations, use time parsimoniously. As a consequence, I made the decision to

1. send out to the participants a short introductory video explaining who I am, the methodology of the seminar, and some of its core objectives;
2. likewise send around guidelines for the simulation exercises so that participants could clearly identify their role and with whom they were to role-play for all four days (eight half-day sessions) of the seminar (this also helped them to study and prepare in advance);
3. clarify and establish a common code of conduct during the Zoom sessions for eventual absences, early departure, connection problems, etc.;
4. create a dedicated Moodle platform in which the participants could easily find and remotely access all the material (simulation instructions, slides, readings, videos, etc.);
5. limit the length of the synchronic online activities to 2.5 hours per session by inviting participants to prepare for the simulation exercises prior to the Zoom session;
6. enlarge the offer of post-training activities, such as suggested further reading, with case studies and videos available on the Moodle platform; and
7. invest a lot of energy into ice-breaking activities before every session and invite people to give their input through the chat in order to have a more inclusive process that would limit the monopolization of the floor by the most vocal people.

The result was very positive, leading me to change my opinion on the opportunities that online trainings may offer. It goes without saying that I still prefer in-person trainings, in which the human factor can be experienced fully. ■

II FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING

Cecilia Albin

The Power of Talk: Recalling the Importance of Face-to-Face Interaction

In July 1991, an Israeli–Palestinian dialogue conference took place over five days at the Sequoia Retreat Center in Ben Lomond, California, sponsored by the Stanford Center on Conflict and Negotiation[1] and the Beyond War Foundation. Ten prominent Israeli and Palestinian political activists took part, as well as Palestinian president Yasser Arafat's advisor on international affairs. Dr. Harold H. Saunders, former US assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern Affairs, acted as facilitator and chair. Participants in supporting roles also included academic experts on conflict resolution and Beyond War staff members. The initial goal of the conference was to encourage creative thinking about new "citizen strategies" to further the Palestinian–Israeli peace process. In fact, it produced a historic substantive agreement on principles and provisions for an Israeli–Palestinian peace. All outstanding issues in the conflict were addressed and agreed upon – including seemingly intractable issues such as the political status of Jerusalem, Palestinian refugees and the right of return, borders, and water resources (Stanford Center on Conflict and Negotiation and the Beyond War Foundation 1991). It was the first peace plan of its kind created and endorsed in writing by both Israelis and Palestinians (including the PLO).

What made this achievement possible just over two years before the Israel–PLO peace agreement of 1993? Working with one Israeli (Moshe Amirav) and one Palestinian (Hanna Siniora) on the provisions regarding the status of Jerusalem, I was able to observe the entire process firsthand. The three of us had already worked together for a year or so and developed a plan for that particular issue, with support from Beyond War and Stanford University. That work had gotten started quite spontaneously and was also carried out face to face in informal meetings in Jerusalem and the United States. Our purpose was to demonstrate by way of a concrete, detailed example that the Jerusalem question – in many ways a microcosm of the whole conflict – could be resolved creatively with care for all fundamental concerns involved (Albin, Amirav, and Siniora 1995).

In explaining the successful process leading to the Ben Lomond agreement, I point to three factors of particular importance in our digital age, all having to do with the power of face-to-face (in-person, non-digital) interaction (for a more in-depth discussion of "talk power," including in the Middle East, see Fen Osler Hampson and I. William Zartman 2012).

Third-Party Facilitation, Guided by a Clear and Relevant Framework

The leadership exercised by Saunders as facilitator was central both to the evolution of the process and to the outcome. In his discerning judgment, he activated long sessions of reflective listening so that the opposing sides could engage with each other's histories and perspectives. His guidance was also firm and firmly grounded in Saunders' own conviction that communities in conflict must act independently of governments and undertake a number of steps designed to change negative perceptions of the other, build trust, and create new peaceful relationships:

> *"[O]fficial negotiations can produce a genuinely peaceful relationship between Israelis and Palestinians only if they are embedded in a larger political process involving the peoples of both communities."*

(Stanford Center on Conflict and Negotiation and the Beyond War Foundation 1991: 10; see also Saunders 1999).

Structured Talks, Combined with more Spontanous Interaction

The structured daytime talks, chaired by Saunders, were only one important part of the conference. Another aspect, just as important, was the more spontaneous interaction taking place in between those sessions – while eating, washing dishes, taking walks in the woods, and so forth. All those things promoted dialogue and creativity.

Supportive Platform and Setting

The platform for the dialogue conference, created jointly by Stanford University and Beyond War, combined academic repute with policy and community involvement and networks. That helped to attract well-placed participants, provided support throughout

1 Now known as the Stanford Center on International Conflict and Negotiation.

the process, and helped with spreading the eventual results. Finally, the choice of a retreat environment was carefully – and well – considered: a set of mountain lodges in a redwood forest provided seclusion, space, and inspiration in support of the process and its objectives. No one left until an agreement was reached, signed by all, and made public.

■

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Frans Schram

Insights on Negotiation Training for Resistance/Liberation Movements

Of all possible groups one might encounter in a negotiation or mediation training seminar, an audience consisting of members of resistance/liberation movements (RLM) – generally non-state armed groups (NSAG) – is certainly one of the more challenging. The challenge lies in navigating not only the complex context in which they operate, but also the nature of their background, expectations, and often distinctive paradigms. The trainings I am referring to mostly take place within the framework of support projects for dialogue, peace negotiation, or mediation processes. Their objective is to improve conditions for political solutions to violent conflict by enhancing the negotiation capacities of RLMs who seek to mitigate asymmetries with governmental counterparts in (facilitated) peace processes. This should ultimately increase both the likelihood of a negotiation's success and the quality of the eventual agreement. Such trainings often blend more practical input, technical assistance, and self-reflection than the typical negotiation seminar and might be followed by joint events for the conflict parties as an onset to real-life dialogue and trust-building.

Although my experience is not all that extensive, I have nonetheless had occasion to work with groups from Afghanistan, the Basque Country, Colombia, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Turkey. The challenges posed by this type of training have consequently led me to revisit training design, methodology, timing, and logistics. RLMs are not all the same, of course, but resemble each other sufficiently to highlight a couple of common features here.

The Actors

Especially when RLM participants have been influenced by (eccentric) ideologies, have not benefited from formal education, and have little experience with non-coercive methods of conflict resolution, particular paradigms of social interaction and bargaining tend to develop. Hence, the influence of specific cognitive biases needs to be considered and the language of the trainer accordingly adjusted. I prefer to start with out-of-context exercises that provoke a recalibration of patterns, reflection on different strategies ("win–win"), long-term thinking, and alternative perceptions and rationalities, and ones that bolster confidence in joint problem-solving.

Compared to other kinds of trainings, the trainer's mandate here is different. Often, RLMs and government parties do not like the idea of being "trained/educated," so euphemistic names for the event such as "strategizing workshop" might be chosen. Idiosyncratic internal decision-making processes, sometimes compounded by in-group frictions, can render a given side's interests opaque and even contradictory. Are participants' expectations realistic, and do they come with personal or especially hierarchy-driven learning goals? Is there a "minder" in the group, controlling the free flow of ideas? If so, who does the trainer need to get buy-in from regarding the teaching approach? The training might additionally serve the interests of enhancing one's status within a given RLM, which could boost certain participants' internal leverage (e.g. women's empowerment) or aid them in becoming official negotiators for their organization. Hence, receiving a certificate of completion is sometimes even more important to the participants than the content of the training itself.

Meeting with the negotiation delegation of the Colombian armed group ELN (Ejército de Liberación Nacional) in Quito, Ecuador, February 2017 © Frans Schram

Method

In my experience, members of RLMs are very eager to learn from external resource persons (though only via trusted connections). They hold in high regard the underpinning negotiation theories, but have an even stronger appetite for practical examples and concrete tips (as other POINT authors have mentioned in these pages). Strengthened by the belief that their conflict is unique, many participants are biased towards a preference for learning from peer-practitioners who have been in similar situations. Out-of-context (yet warranted) simulations and examples, as well as abstract (academic) theories, therefore need to be carefully framed and continually linked to the group's reality. Further-more, a limited education/literacy level of participants, together with the need for simultaneous or consecutive interpretation, can render such workshops time-consuming and necessitate very simple, bite-size exercises. Using in-context exercises and examples can serve to ease the acceptance – and probably comprehension – of imparted theory and underlying principles, but may also limit out-of-the-box thinking and reinforce unhelpful biases.

Finally, despite a number of challenges (occasional concerns for personal safety, language barriers, last-minute changes, etc.), such trainings remain some of the most stimulating, due to the trainer's own learning experience and the heartwarming gratitude of the groups.

■

Tariel Sikharulidze

And Every Word Matters

The story that I am telling you might be true, fictitious, or even a combination of different true or fictitious stories. It occurred in a big Northern country, whose name I shall ignore. Imagine a negotiator who represents a buyer in a negotiation to buy helicopters for his company from a company willing to sell them. The seller's company is using the helicopters to transport pipes and other oil-drilling equipment to the places where the drilling equipment is to be installed. The buyer company is involved in GSM antenna construction and intends to use the helicopters to transport the GSM antenna parts and gensets to the otherwise inaccessible parts of the country where GSM companies want to expand their networks. Parallel to the first stage of negotiation, a joint technical inspection team starts its work to determine the condition of the helicopters. As negotiators sit at the table establishing the terms of agreement, such as monetary terms, terms of payments, and the handover timeline of the helicopters, engineers are busy drafting their technical reports and informing the two negotiation teams about the conditions of the apparel. During the talks, the buyer's engineers report that the helicopters have no major technical deficiencies or damage. An agreement is drafted. Deal done. The helicopters, according to the agreement, would be handed to the buyer in a month and would stay operational for the seller up until the handover. According to the contract, the second technical review would be carried out in thirty days, on the day the buyer is to take possession of the helicopters. A negotiated clause specifies that the "seller is not liable for any technical deficiencies in the helicopters found during the second inspection, if any occurred between the two inspections."

The second meeting takes place in thirty days, as agreed. Parallel to the second meeting, the buyer's engineers carry out a second inspection and report that oil leaks and some other technical and electrical problems have been registered on some machines. The buyer's negotiator informs the seller about the problems.

The seller does not want to accept the liability and cover the necessary repairs. The seller refers to the contract only to discover that a small word is missing from the text, a detail that changes everything. The signed document stipulates that the "seller is liable for any technical deficiencies in the helicopters found during the second inspection, if any occurred between the two inspections" – the word "not" was missing from the phrase.

What I would like to convey with this short story:

As Vasilescu points out in these pages, negotiators need to be focused on very important aspects of the negotiations, and this is not limited to the quantity and quality of the negotiation. One of the most important aspects is a deliverable, a text. Negotiations are not only about the BATNA, ZOPA, interests, and positions, they are also about the quality of the text. The text matters because, as one Russian saying goes,

"What is written with a pen cannot be cut down with an ax."

When negotiators rush at the end, it might be because of fatigue, frustration, or even relief that the deal is finally done. Negotiators may forget to double-check the agreement, or they may forget that whoever drafts the text has "the power of the pen." When negotiators are at the final stage, they better make sure that all i's are dotted and t's crossed.

I would like to join Emmanuel Vivet in underlining the importance of using examples in class. Examples illustrate real-life negotiations or mediations in which we as negotiators, mediators, and trainers are involved. We can also use examples from history or history books that can be adapted to explain multiple facets of negotiations. Another method would be to build on examples provided by our students, analyze them in class or during the training, and transform them into our teaching material. It seems fitting at this point to thank my students and trainees for the myriad examples they have given in trainings over the years.

■

Dragos-Christian Vasilescu

Do Details Matter? An Explanation of the Importance of Focus in Negotiations

Far too often, I end up on the defensive – having to justify why teaching the art and science of negotiations is useful. Yet, when asking the same colleagues if they are content leaving value on the table that their counterparts would happily give away, I am met with disagreement or silence. Somehow, for reasons that I do not fully understand, the idea of negotiating – a skill that was highly sought after and useful in the past – started to be seen as unclean, dishonest, and unethical, at least among large swaths of Germanic cultures. In a perfectly transparent world, there would be no need for negotiations, but in our imperfect world, if used responsibly, is there a reason to not use a tool that has demonstrably helped human civilization through the ages?

During my negotiation trainings, I have been lucky enough to have a number of eureka moments. These insights – besides improving and refining my own image of decision-making and negotiations – were incorporated into my subsequent training sessions, adding complexity and multiple dimensions (wisdom, I like to think) to the teachings. In the next few lines, I want to share with you one of these insights.

Almost invariably, participants in negotiation simulations, but also real-world negotiations, follow a similar path: they move slowly in the beginning and then rush at the end. While more experienced participants gravitate toward better managing their time, the desire to express as many ideas as possible and to reach agreements as detailed as feasible remains largely the same. The fact is, however, negotiations are about quality, not quantity. In the process of creating large agreements designed to solve multiple problems, fundamental issues are left untouched – quite similar to not seeing the forest for the trees. Even more dangerously, in the heat of the moment, the negotiators tend to sign agreements that either cannot be implemented or completely lack regulatory or oversight clauses, which leads to new disputes, tension, and conflict.

A better approach here would be to focus on the important aspects of the negotiation, making sure the needs of the counterparts are heard and understood, even if they are not directly expressed. Understanding and willingness to help are good first steps in developing trust, an important and often necessary commodity in all layers of society. Once the core issues of the negotiation are agreed upon, typically in more informal settings, the doors open for further negotiations on the finer details. This can be done later, in multiple stages, in more formal or informal settings, even sometimes with different actors. This way, rather than representing the end of a rushed discussion, the initial agreement becomes a road opener, inviting future discussions against a backdrop of trust and cooperation. In my experience, negotiators who have already agreed on the core issues in past negotiations experience less stress, which increases their overall satisfaction with the outcomes.

In the end, negotiating should not be as much about acquiring something as about instilling peace of mind that all options were explored.

■

I. William Zartman

PeaceKidZ

I have been teaching undergraduate and graduate students all my adult life, but the most unusual and perhaps most rewarding experience has been PeaceKidZ. Fifteen years ago, when the Strategic Studies Program at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) put on a simulation of an international crisis at a local high school, I said, “We can do better than that,” and invited any students interested to sign up for teaching Conflict Management (my program) to inner-city middle-school children. A dozen International Relations graduate students showed up, and PeaceKidZ was born, named by the first class, the Z for me. It carries course credit for the student-teachers, and the lesson plan for nine hour-long sessions covers the three Rs that the student-teachers devised: respect, recognize, resolve, the second term referring to recognition of the type and source of conflict involved.

The result has been extraordinary. Even though most students are coming in without teaching experience, there have been no real flops. About one-third of our student-teachers come from other countries; in this way, they bring in fresh perspectives based on their experiences in life in general and, more specifically, with Washington, DC’s public school system. Responding to a kid who exclaimed, “Hey, what do you know about our real life, it’s a matter of survival,” the student-teacher in question paused and then answered, “Well, when I grew up, in Tajikistan […],” and the matter was closed. It is a real world of knives, detention, family members in jail, others killed, and being suspended from school to a home where there is no parent. The first exchange in the first session often goes something like this: “Who sent you here? DC Public Schools?” (“Nobody, I’m here on my own”), “What are you doing here?” (“I’m here to talk with you about better responses to hitting back”), “So, who’s paying you?” (“Nobody, I’m just a student at the university”), “Oh,” and after that things tend to open up.

We thought we were training kids to be playground mediators and help settle fights. It turned out the conflicts they got caught in were as much at home as at school. The student-teachers often end up serving as role models; even with only nine sessions, kids come to them for counseling and to talk about personal problems. The challenge is to change an entire culture. The culture of survival demands hitting back when hit. One common problem is verbal or media slander. The common response is to escalate; better alternatives are to confront (“Why did you say that?”), or to correct (“That’s not what I said”), or to conciliate (“Let’s talk this over”), among others. Bullying is a frequent problem. The first alternative to hitting back is to walk away, but the peer response is to call out “chicken/coward” to the person being bullied, encouraging the bully to pursue. A crowd gathers; it becomes entertainment. Other possible responses involve interrogation (“Why are you doing this?”), incorporation (to the crowd, “Why do you think s/he is doing this?”), deflection (“Did you have a bad day? Did your mother beat you?”), and isolation (“Long live diversity – we can’t all be like you”), among many others. We are still looking and testing.

The student-teachers learn as they teach. They ask for conflict examples, and the class discusses a better way of handling them, often with greater creativity than the teachers could show. (We always learn from our students.) The student-teachers become familiar with their own range of reactions: on-the-job learning. Once, a kid who did something awful was sent to the principal’s office, expecting expulsion; the student-teachers came along. When the principal asked them what to do with him, the student-teachers looked at each other, with no prepared communication, and answered, “Send him back to class.” They never had trouble with him again.

We do not expect an awakening and total conversion after nine sessions. What we aim for is a different approach to conflict to be lodged somewhere in the kids’ minds so that someday when they find themselves in a bind, they may say, “Hey, isn’t there a better way?” We were happy when one homeroom teacher told us she saw a change in kids’ behavior. Evaluations from the student-teachers note new learning experiences for themselves. A real win–win.

■

III APPROACHES TO TRAINING

Rob Boudewijn

Multilateral Simulation Games: Preparations Are Crucial!

Summit of the Hague for the Ministry of Economic Affairs, 2019
© Rob Boudewijn

As described elsewhere in this *PINPoints* by Sami Faltas, simulations are a powerful tool to understand and gain insight into the complexity of multilateral negotiations. The participants in a simulation need to come to a compromise, through formal and informal negotiations, that is acceptable for all delegations at the end of the day. Equally important are the preparations for a simulation. To that end, my institute has developed a standard training model that has been applied for several years at universities, diplomatic academies, and training institutes. This model consists of an initial training day two weeks prior to the simulation itself. During the first training day, participants get acquainted with European Union negotiation techniques and decision-making procedures and hone their negotiation skills with several bilateral and multilateral exercises. At the end of the first day, all participants receive background information about the simulation, their individual instructions and, most important, the Diplomatic Paper Manual. The participants must research the position of their delegation and collect additional information for the subsequent simulation.

Workshop in Zagreb, Croatia, for young Croatian diplomats involved in EU affairs, 2015
© Rob Boudewijn

These preparations have two advantages: 1) participants are well informed, well prepared, and capable of finding creative solutions to solve the challenge(s), and 2) institutions that want to work with grades are provided the opportunity to evaluate the preparatory work of the participants. In support of the participants' preparations, the Diplomatic Paper Manual requires that they address the following questions and prompts:

1. What is the relation of your delegation to the issue?
2. Do you want to add issues to the agenda? Provide convincing arguments for the addition of issues.
3. Describe the context and background of the several agenda items.
4. What is your preferred order of the agenda? Provide arguments for this order.
5. Describe what decision-making procedure applies and the legal basis for it.
6. What are the hard issues for your delegation (and why), and which ones can be used as currency?
7. In your opinion, which agenda items can be linked in a package deal, and which cannot?
8. Describe the level playing field: Who is most likely to support and oppose each agenda issue?
9. Describe your opening strategy during the "tour du table," your use of potential coalitions, the use of formal and informal negotiation rounds, and your relationship with the presidency/chair.
10. Describe in your evaluation the minimum result you aspire to; feel free to add a press communiqué.

Since the introduction of the Diplomatic Paper Manual, in which the participants are required to address these ten issues, the quality of the content, debate, and participant preparations have risen tremendously. As Kissinger famously opined, it doesn't matter how long you negotiate, the deal always happens in the last hour. Using the Diplomatic Paper Manual, though, participants can reach an agreement two or more hours before the planned end!

■

Paul Meerts

Lessons for and from Training: From Practice to Theory

My approach to training diplomats and other civil and military officers cannot be labeled methodology. As nice as it would be to have a "Meerts Model," training in interstate negotiation processes cannot be effective if it is locked up in a specific frame. A model or methodology creates limitations, often obstructing thorough negotiation awareness. My approach is to understand negotiation theory by experiencing negotiation processes.

As the essence of negotiation is to give something in order to get something, it will be determined by its characteristics (procedure and process), characters (people and parties), and context (politics and power), in addition to many other factors, of course, such as history, geography, culture, and state structure. Negotiation is a situational phenomenon.

This variability explains why I prefer a flexible approach that can easily adapt to the circumstances and to the cohorts being trained. It is an approach used by several of my former students who have gone on to become successful trainers. Everyone has her or his own focus; mine is awareness of international politics through negotiation. In principle, a standard training looks like this:

1. introduction, bilateral distributive and integrative bargaining, interests and emotions;
2. process and procedure, power and people, skills and styles, strategy and tactics;
3. minilateral and multilateral negotiation processes and, if time allows, mediation;
4. integration of all training documents into a workbook with exercises and content.

Thirty years of experience as a trainer in international (interstate) negotiation processes has provided me with some useful insights. To start with my own country (The Netherlands), we tried to make Dutch politicians aware of the value of rituals in bargaining with foreigners. We have been less than successful: most of them are still as blunt as ever.

European Union

In my experience, one of the most difficult groups to train are civil servants of the European Commission. They are used to following the orders of their superiors and therefore have difficulty in simulation games where they have to decide for themselves. However, representatives of EU member states become "Brusselized," which enhances their flexibility.

NATO

Training military officers in Brussels has been a serious pain in the neck. At the beginning of the 1980s they believed, "In NATO, we do not negotiate." This attitude has since changed, and my experience at NATO Defense College in Rome is that discipline can be advantageous, as it promotes clarity. However, too much transparency can be disadvantageous.

Formerly Socialist Countries

Civil servants who are located in their own countries' capitals and rarely travel abroad are much more rigid than their compatriots in Brussels – they want to take, but not give. Students from those regions, however, are often very active. They want to make up for the perceived "laziness" of the professionals in their countries. The students want to create a better world, although they want to have a nice career as well.

Paul Meerts with female civil servants of the Iranian bureaucracy, Teheran 1999
© Paul Meerts

For further European perspectives on transcultural topics, I gladly refer to other contributions with more deliberate observations in this issue of *PINPoints*: Siniša Vuković on culture in general, Olivier Faure on China, Will Baber and Larry Crump each on Japan, and Joana Matos, who confronts her own cultural frame vis-à-vis the behavior of her students.

Above is a photo of female civil servants of the Iranian bureaucracy, whom I trained in 1999. They held important functions and most of them were highly educated. I asked them if I could take their picture, which I expected them to refuse. However, they said, "Of course, and please sit with us."

■

Valérie Rosoux

Dealing with the Past

How can we deal with the past in the aftermath of mass atrocities? This question was the starting point of a series of trainings that began in 2002. These trainings gathered diplomats, NGO workers, military personnel, policymakers, and scholars from all continents, junior and senior alike. They took place in the United States (mainly at the US Institute of Peace in Washington, DC), Europe (from Belgium to Montenegro), Africa (Rwanda and South Africa), and Russia (in St. Petersburg and Moscow). The trainings were adjusted to the professional trajectories of the participants. However, some exercises and simulations were identical in all workshops. This common basis allows us to compare the attitudes and representations of various types of participants.

Four major lessons merit underlining. The first regards the plurality of understandings of key concepts. In this regard, the way people understand the notion of post-war reconciliation is emblematic. The trainings always started with a brainstorming session triggered by a simple question such as: “What are you talking about when you talk about reconciliation?” It is striking that the same word can be understood in at least three very different ways. For some participants, reconciliation was almost synonymous with conflict management and referred to any kind of accommodation between former enemies. Contrary to this minimalist approach, other participants emphasized a transcendental process that requires forgiveness. Aside from these two conceptions, another group of participants (coming mostly from Russia) defined reconciliation as a process imposed by the victorious parties. Despite their differing definitions, most participants stressed the significance of trust and truth.

A second major lesson is related to the participants’ individual experiences – specifically, the distinction between actual history and official memory. Most American and Western participants believed the aim of history is to reconstitute events in a manner that depends as little as possible on variable interpretations, viewing official memory as representations of the past that are emphasized by certain groups according to their political interests. By contrast, most participants with direct experience of authoritarian regimes questioned this distinction, believing that both history and official memory are always being adapted to present circumstances and interests, and can therefore be used as a form of propaganda in favor of the ruling party.

The third lesson concerns the attitudes of participants towards emotions. In the aftermath of wars, emotions such as grief, anger, resentment, shame, and guilt are widely shared and passed on in family circles. To face them, participants can adopt two main attitudes. The vast majority of participants distinguished between positive and negative emotions. To them, anger, hatred, and resentment were totally negative, while forgiveness was described as an obvious aim in conflict resolution. To other participants, emotions were neither positive nor negative. From this perspective, emotions were thought of as ambiguous and mostly dependent on the objectives being pursued. Thus, the expression of anger or resentment might be seen as a necessary step in order to move forward.

IPSI DC 2018
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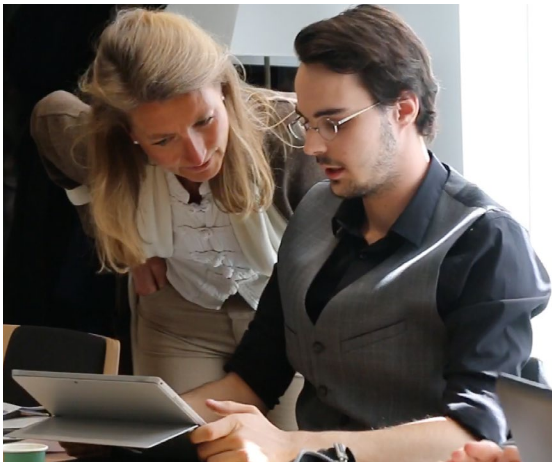
The last lesson that I have drawn is related to timing. While I was teaching at Nelson Mandela University in Port Elisabeth with Mark Anstey, I screened a documentary that had been one basic element of my pedagogical toolbox. The film is about a dramatic case before the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Until then, this powerful story had been useful for stimulating discussions about the difficulties people face in post-conflict settings. At first glance, one might think showing the film to a South African audience would not be appropriate, as they would already know the story by heart. Actually, though, some students were so deeply moved by the film that they had to stop watching it. During the debriefing with these students, they explained that they "did not know" and that it was shocking. After a long discussion, Mark Anstey and I realized that when they said, "We did not know," they meant, "We don't want to know – at least not now." This experience showed us that emotions such as humiliation and resentment can linger not just for years, but for generations.

■



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Remigiusz Smolinski

World Championship in Negotiation?

Who is the greatest composer of all time? While some experts put Bach on the highest pedestal of all music makers in history, others may find convincing arguments for Beethoven or Mozart, more than worthy contenders for the prestigious title.

There are multiple variations of similar questions. Who is the best pianist, driver, soccer player, athlete? What do all these questions have in common? First, they all refer to a mastery in a certain skill. Second, these questions must have bothered humankind so much for so long that at some point our ancestors decided to develop a set of rules and evaluation criteria and launch structured competitions to determine the answers.

Most negotiation scholars and instructors define negotiation as a skill. Adopting such a definition helps us justify our existence, but it also has profound consequences with respect to the outcome of our work. If negotiation is a skill, it can be improved through structured feedback and training, but if that is the case, negotiators' performances can also be systematically measured and compared.

© TNC

These thoughts guided our design of the structure and evaluation criteria of The Negotiation Challenge (www.thenegotiationchallenge.org), which has become one of the world's major negotiation competitions, attracting and inspiring hundreds of the most talented student-negotiators. As organizers and judges in this and other negotiation competitions, we have been privileged to witness a unique combination of mastery and passion. We were also honored to assess the performance of the participants and share our feedback on how to improve it in the future.

Yet, despite decades of negotiation research, there has been very little work done by negotiation scholars on how to capture and compare negotiators' performances. Although we have conducted countless experiments and simulations and, based on their results, developed numerous recommendations and aggregated them into methods, a comprehensive model that would capture mastery in negotiation remains to be developed.

With our Negotiation Competency Model (Smolinski and Xiong 2020), initially developed for the purpose of The Negotiation Challenge, we intend to trigger a debate among negotiation scholars concerning the evaluation criteria of negotiators' performances. Only with such a model (or an alternative one) can we measure our effectiveness as negotiation instructors and offer fair negotiation competitions.

Equipped with the Negotiation Competency Model and the experience gathered running The Negotiation Challenge, later this year we plan to launch a negotiation competition for practitioners. Encouraged by the international recognition of our competitions, our long-term vision remains to develop them into the World Championship in Negotiation.

■

Stefan Szepesi

Using Martial Arts in Negotiation Training

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In my first aikido session as a trainee in a negotiation training, I committed the basic mistake against which I, now as a trainer, warn participants so often: I made an assumption. I assumed the session was intended as a piece of physical relaxation within an intensive multi-day negotiation training. After an hour we would continue with the "real" program, right?

But aikido in negotiation training is not a re-energizer or icebreaker. Aikido – the Japanese martial art whose name is often translated as the "way of harmonious spirit" – is the physical metaphor closest to the core of what some call the school of principled negotiation.

Participants can learn a lot about negotiation through theory, interactive (case) discussion, role-playing, and simulations. But applying that knowledge is often experienced as difficult in real work situations that are unusual, stressful, or even threatening – especially when the pressure is on and when others are watching. How can I simply *be* in control rather than telling myself that I *should* be? During and after negotiation training, many participants wrestle with the question of how to deal with difficult people. What if the other side is overbearing, stubborn, condescending, positional, and hell-bent on a win–lose outcome? Entire bookshelves have been written about these situations. The core of that wisdom is often passed on in training.

But the challenge is that understanding what works best is quite far from actual practice "at the table." The "fight or flight" pattern is deeply rooted in us. In conflict, we give physical and mental triggers the right of way in determining our responses; only afterwards, when we have left the room, can we determine rationally what we could have done differently ("Oh yes, my book / trainer / mentor / podcast said so!").

In aikido, the goal is to enter a physical confrontation (kindly referred to as a "meeting") in such a way that both parties emerge from it in good shape. In my experience as a trainer, a group practicing basic aikido techniques physically experiences how taking a wide perspective ("see the other and the world around you") enables you to stand firm, with childish ease, against the pushing of a larger and physically stronger opponent. The workshop focuses on how you can respond rather than react to pressure, moving yourself next to, instead of opposite, the other person. This may sound "soft" (can you still serve your interests?), but in aikido, you experience that you are physically the least vulnerable if you calmly position yourself shoulder to shoulder with your attacker.

It is no different in negotiation. Positional resistance is a trap: the reaction instead of the response. In a good negotiation training, you can come to understand that, but do you remember it in the unruly and unscripted practice of everyday life? And how do you take an alternative route and invite the other person to go along? Physically experiencing these techniques instead of only rationally applying them is an inspiring complement to traditional training.

■

Emmanuel Vivet

Working with Examples: From Anecdotes to History

Many a POINTer has described here, better than I could myself, the importance of simulations in the teaching of negotiation, adding instrumental advice on how best to use them. Mark Anstey also makes an additional useful distinction with his explication of case studies.

My point here is of lesser importance, though examples are something we all use in class. What constitutes a good example, where do you get them, and how do you use them?

Good examples are those with an angle well adapted to the theory they are supposed to illustrate. Examples that are too complex hide their real value, because the crux passes students by when they are combing through overwhelming details. Good examples must be clear-cut and simple, along the lines of what Sami Faltas writes in these pages of simulations.

Examples should remain restricted to what they illustrate, be well connected to it, and limited in time and quantity so as not to flood students' minds with particulars.

I came to realize the value of working carefully on the examples given in class when I noticed the good impression outlining these cases left on my students. In telling firsthand stories, a trainer can convey more authenticity, sometimes emotion, and grab students' attention. The power of emotion should not be overlooked; stories that touch the heart are more likely to be remembered, alongside the theories they represent.

To enlarge our source material, we can also use stories we have been told by firsthand witnesses. The small variations from one storyteller to another do not diminish their pedagogic value, as relevance is more important than perfect accuracy.

Working harder to find new examples, I eventually realized that we can pick examples from the huge well of real cases that comprise history itself. Students usually enjoy references to history, whether in regard to Churchill, Talleyrand, Mandela, the Vienna Congress, or the UN Security Council. However, simply telling stories from history is not enough. This is because historians generally look for explanations and causes, for ramifications and complexity, whereas trainers look for clarity and epitome. History finds multicausal explanations, whereas negotiation, a practical science, seeks out methodologies. Therefore, negotiation trainers, before they use historical examples, cannot just do with reading, understanding, and telling stories, but should use those as a raw material that needs to be clarified, sharpened, and polished, so as to identify the quintessence of a given historical context. When this work is done carefully, the introduction of both a salient example and its wider context enriches the course by showing students, for a few seconds or a couple of minutes, how negotiations can connect with history and the tide of time. ■

Emmanuel Vivet at France-Belarus air services treaty negotiation, January 2020
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IV TOOLS IN TRAINING

Mark Anstey

Case Studies as a Learning Tool for Negotiating Deadlocks

Simulations are the technique of choice for facilitating the learning of process-management skills. A useful adjunct, however, is the use of case studies. Effective negotiators must master a range of analytic and practical skills. I use a set of case studies based on real-life conflict situations to help delegates in negotiation courses hone their analytic skills in deadlock scenarios. Case studies must be carefully prepared. They have value in that they are drawn from the practical experience of others. Knowing the outcome of a negotiation process allows a situation to be reverse-engineered into a case that challenges delegates working in small groups to respond with how they would have worked through a particular impasse. Then, rather than pursue the open-ended learning goals of some simulations oriented towards process management, a facilitator is able to inform course delegates of the steps taken by real-life negotiators to resolve a particular impasse.

First, delegates are provided with an easy-to-use framework for understanding conflicts. Three elements are highlighted for analysis: the behavioral expression of the conflict (how the parties have chosen to deal with their differences), the sources of those differences (what they are squabbling over), and factors influencing their behavioral choices (why they have made certain choices). This analytic framework offers insights into the dynamics of typical problems in scenarios of escalating conflict such as positional over-commitment, misjudgments of relative capacity, entrapment, ego-driven problems, the significance of secondary-party influences, and constituency pressures. For instance, a party's over-commitment to positions might be based on a misjudgment of its actual capacity to prevail; such a misjudgment may lead a party to think it does not need to negotiate, as the other party will simply roll over, or that costs incurred in a coercive victory might be low.

Delegates are then broken up into small groups and asked to identify the dynamics of a small collection of deadlock scenarios; based on their analysis, they are then asked to brainstorm ways in which the impasses might have been overcome. Options are then discussed in plenary and the actual process strategies and tactics of individual cases revealed.

Analysis of conflict scenarios in which deadlocks have been successfully overcome provides delegates some of the following insights:

- how coordinated secondary-party actions might shift parties' commitment to positions, making negotiation more rewarding than pursuing strategies of direct defeat;
- how, through reframing, parties holding divergent positions might come to see value in working together to shape a common future;
- how problems of entrapment might be overcome through different layers of dialogue, shifts in the use of mobilization language with and between constituencies, moratoriums on public statements, the language of sequencing seemingly opposing actions, and the language of “and” rather than “or”;
- how responding to underlying interests might offer ways to ease hard positional commitments;
- how reality-based considerations of the future might temper perceptions of a given party's capacity to prevail simply through coercion; and
- how hard-liners might be softened through expanding participation to include soft-liner influences within a community.

■

Sami Faltas

Simulation: A Powerful Training Tool

Learning by doing is powerful, often essential. You cannot learn to swim, drive, or negotiate by attending lectures. To acquire a skill, you must practice it. Simulation allows you to try things out and make mistakes without suffering serious consequences. It is embarrassing to crash your aircraft in a simulator or to fail in mock negotiations, but you will survive and learn.

You cannot practice negotiation alone, so you will need to join others in simulation exercises. Lessons to be learned include the importance of preparation, finding the right tone and register, keeping your Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement (BATNA) in mind, looking beyond bargaining positions to broader interests, and widening the scope for give and take.

Unfortunately, simulation exercises have their limitations. Within only a few hours, the players cannot fully develop a constructive relationship with the other side, nor can they appreciate why doing so is crucial. They are also unlikely to learn the decisive importance of what comes after a negotiation – namely, convincing their superiors at home to carry out the new deal properly.

I used to write long scenarios full of colorful characters for full-day role-play games, which tended to be both instructive and good fun. Today, my games are shorter, simpler, and less colorful. I believe the story and the instructions should be brief. Players need to understand the basic setting, the dispute, their position, their interests, and their goal. They will play a role, not a specific character. Consequently, they are more likely to focus on the process than on the personalities. I like to use a fictitious setting. This simplifies matters and levels the playing field. The information required is equally available to all in the scenario.

The post-game analysis serves to identify what we learned. Here, I like to begin by praising what the players did well and then gently point out what went wrong, why it went wrong, and what the consequences were. We then discuss what might have been a better course of action.

Every time I run a simulation game, the experience is different. I usually find that the participants focus too much on the formal negotiations at the main table and do not engage in much backchannel consultation and bargaining. In real life, it is precisely in the back rooms where compromises are discussed and deals prepared. However, in a recent game, the players went to the other extreme: the back-channel talks dominated the formal exchanges, eventually paralyzing them.

Surprise visit by prime minister to committee of inquiry, Tajikistan 2013
© Sami Faltas

This drove the message home that delegations need to coordinate their various levels of communication. The players had made a useful mistake.

A Confucian saying goes:

“I hear and I forget.
I see and I remember.
I do and I understand.”

Confucius probably never said this, but he should have.

■

Léna Salamé

Innovative Training in Water Conflict Management

The world's water resources are under increasing pressure from exponentially growing human demands. Competition and even disputes have arisen around the use of water, given the diversity of needs and interests surrounding it, its pivotal role in development, and the inherent tendency of humans towards conflict.

Stakeholders from all geographical scales, activity sectors, and political circles must be prepared to anticipate, prevent, and address water conflicts as they arise. Many efforts have been made in the field of water management to preclude conflict and engender co-operative behaviors. The most efficient ingredient in peaceful water management, however, lies in training for conflict management, which draws on past experiences to help prepare stakeholders for situations that are likely to arise in the future. It builds the basis for long-term and autonomous solutions to the challenges at hand. Rarely, though, do training activities become part of resource management's standard operating procedures. When a conflict or dispute does flare up, it is not clear that parties have internalized all or even any of their training.

Convinced of the impact that well-prepared and well-delivered training can have, I conceived of and directed an international conference on water and peace in Zaragoza, Spain (October 2006). The event was totally innovative in the water community at that time. It offered participants an experience in alternative dispute resolution (ADR) techniques applied to the management of transboundary water.

The event was a three-day laboratory for 150 participants from 41 different countries. It focused on four different transboundary basins: the Chu-Talas (Kyrgyz Republic/Kazakhstan), the Incomati (Mozambique, Swaziland, and South Africa), the Nahr al-Kabir (Lebanon/Syria), and the Pedernales (Haiti/Dominican Republic). Each riparian country from each of the four basins was represented by at least two participants, mainly water professionals from the countries' ministries in charge of water matters and members of river-basin committees.

© Pixabay/Gerd Altmann

Each session focused on one basin and first highlighted its specificities. A professional trainer then directed the attention of the audience to particular elements of that basin, which were to serve as the context for a subsequent role play. The public then observed a demonstration of a given ADR technique (e.g. negotiation, mediation, consensus-building, etc.) that was to be applied during the following phase – namely, the role play, which was expected to address the challenges of cooperative management in the given basin.

During the role-play phase, participants acted out situations relating to countries and river basins other than their own. For example, a Syrian representative played the role of a Haitian minister in the session on the Pedernales basin, and vice versa. At the same time, participants from the countries/river basins under discussion observed how outside players discussed issues concerning their basin: e.g. Haitian participants observed how the Syrian representative portrayed the position of a Haitian minister, and vice versa. This modus operandi was chosen to establish detachment and allow participants from each basin to witness how outsiders might view and address issues from their basin in an objective manner: without getting entangled in cultural, historical, religious, or other matters, and with the ability to focus on facts and stay oriented towards the future.

Other participants from the audience (not basin representatives) were also involved in the role plays. Water professionals, decision-makers from water ministries, diplomats, and students came together to form working groups in which diverging positions, views, and interests were negotiated. This kind of involvement added perspective, expertise, and richness to each process.

The interactions throughout these processes were different from those in real life. They were unprejudiced and reflected a variety of expertise and levels of capacity as they "should" be in real life. The feedback was astonishing, as most representatives who observed others playing the role they would have in real life declared that the experience was unique and taught them invaluable lessons in objectivity, dialogue, cooperation, and, as one even said, "democracy."

In response to the increased water challenges worldwide, a "new" type of water manager and decision-maker is required. They will be asked to act as "problem managers" rather than "problem solvers." They will not only need strong, process-oriented, technological knowledge but will also, and most importantly, have to master a certain set of negotiation skills. They must have had the occasion to practice those skills and be proficient in implementing them. And, of course, besides these necessary skills, they must show willingness to participate in long cooperative journeys. The best recipe to achieve that is to use innovative training scenarios such as those described above.

■

Rudolf Schuessler

Realistic Simulations in Teaching University Students

My experience as a negotiation trainer is restricted to university seminars in which negotiations are simulated through enacting real-life scenarios, often from the realms of business and politics. Sitting in the presence of the actual CEO who struck the deal, students learn how merger negotiations between corporations feel. The CEO comments critically on the strategies and solutions suggested by the students based on some key financial indicators. The numbers are fictional but realistic. I have more generally written on these kinds of seminars in *PINPoints* 36. Let me therefore dwell here on just my favorite case.

The case is a prospective one – that is, enactment occurred before the real negotiations took place. In the simulation, the students tried to find a compromise for the 2007–2013 European Union financial framework. The EU financial framework specifies the EU budget for the years in question. The negotiations are burdened by a very dense, not to mention opaque, set of regulations that circumscribe the roles and entitlements of several key EU institutions, such as the European Commission, the European Council, and the European Parliament. There are different voting thresholds for different issues and institutions and different outcomes for different ways in which the framework negotiations can fail. The students prepared more than six months for the exercise, getting familiar with the labyrinth of regulations, the country backgrounds, and the EU institutions. They also learned about the actual GDP, debt, and spending levels that mattered for the negotiations. Generous informational and motivational support by the European Commission, the German Ministry of Finance, and the State of Bavaria ensured that the students were supplied with current data. Academic specialists on EU finances along with officers from the EC and the German Ministry of Finance supplied important briefs in response to students' requests for further information and assessments. Last but not least, we were allowed to stage the simulation in Brussels in the negotiating rooms of the European Parliament itself.

Needless to say, the students relished the realistic feel of the simulation. They even studied the personalities of the leaders whom they would represent in the simulation in order to produce a more realistic result. The fact that the simulation involved a student excursion to Brussels engendered intriguing, but unintended side effects. A good part of the final result, the students assured me, depended on preliminary agreements that different groups had made bilaterally in the bus on the road to Brussels. To what extent agreements among EU leaders are similarly dependent on prior logrolling is indeed a good question. On the whole, the simulation results did not deviate too widely from the outcome the heads of state later reached. The inertia of the agrarian budget was simulated especially well. Even if the task of dynamiting the agrarian budget was explicitly given to some of the negotiators, this task proved next to impossible. To make progress in the simulations, an agreement not to overly meddle with the agrarian budget proved crucial. Can we learn from this for the real EU financial framework negotiations? Surely not from an isolated experiment, but with a set of simulations, the kinds of change that should not be expected from a round of negotiations might become apparent. For such changes to occur, some other setting needs to be conceived.

■

V PEOPLE IN TRAINING

Tony Bass

EU Presidency Training Programmes: What Do Public Servants Want?

I have observed some distinct trends in my years of experience delivering training to thousands of civil servants from more than a dozen EU member states who were preparing for their roles during an EU presidency. The observations in this report are based both on reactions during trainings and on post-course evaluations.

Theory or Practice?

There is a strong preference for trainers who combine a storytelling approach with practice-oriented hints and tips. Participants feel their needs are best addressed by a trainer who provides a wide range of information about day-to-day practices and advice on how to prepare on a personal level, rather than one whose style is based on classical approaches to negotiation training or who simply imparts the knowledge of EU decision-making procedures that s/he has gathered through the years.

While participants do appreciate negotiation simulation games, they feel they benefit most when the post-game analysis is strongly focused on operational practicalities and accompanied by short examples of real-life situations that illustrate how to handle specific situations they may face. While some participants value sessions that provide an understanding of the dynamics and theoretical approaches to negotiations, most tend to rate information-rich and/or practice-oriented sessions considerably higher.

Personal vs. Professional Needs?

When asked about their training needs and expectations at the beginning of a training, participants tend to focus on their professional role, with many expressing fears about their capacity to deliver successful outcomes (often because of perceived resource deficiencies). These concerns tend to revolve around unfamiliarity with the inner workings of an EU presidency. Many participants lack experience in working so closely with other member state delegates and Commission and Council Secretariat staff, and in negotiating with members of the European Parliament. Other fears concern how to deal with unforeseen crises; how to prioritize and manage multiple issues; and how to plan, prepare for, and chair meetings in Brussels.

However, if one digs a little deeper, one finds that participants' fears are also often related to personal issues, such as worrying about the potential workload's possible impact on personal health and relationships with partners, children, parents, or other family, and close friends. Participants value guidance on personal preparation, such as how to deal with stress, or, for those with mental health issues, how to build resilience by recognizing warning signs, developing coping mechanisms, and seeking support from colleagues and others.

Identifying what underpins these fears, addressing causes "head-on," and employing "confidence-building" techniques have become central aspects of my approach to these trainings. Simply providing lots of practical advice on how to plan work and prepare for and handle everyday situations, along with offering personal "hints and tips," has resulted in consistently highly rated training interventions.

■

Hans van den Berg

“One Summer School to Go, Please!”

How do you design a course on negotiation? What elements will engage participants? What types of skills do they need to learn? These questions ran through my mind while I was setting up a program for The Young Diplomat called Summer School of 2019: Democracy & Diplomacy. Many articles in this edition have focused on particular elements of negotiation training for different audiences. But how do we build an effective program keeping in mind the elements discussed in these articles? While setting up and executing the program for this, my first “summer school” project, I learned some valuable lessons.

Let me start by quoting my mentor, who says that “negotiation is situational” (Meerts 2020). This also applies when designing training programs on negotiation. You cannot simply copy

Prof. Dr. Ir. Joris Voorhoeve delivering the opening speech for the two-day simulation on North Macedonia
© Hans van den Berg

and apply the same training programs to every situation; rather, for each new event you should ask yourself a few questions: First, who is your target audience, and what are the goals of the program? At the summer school we focused on students from a less privileged socioeconomic background,

Participants in The Young Diplomat‘s summer school met with several diplomats to discuss how to translate knowledge into practice
© Hans van den Berg

with the simple purpose of augmenting their skill set with an eye to success on the job market. Knowing who your target audience is helps identify what you want to offer them; for the summer school our goals were threefold, as we sought to offer participants access to in-depth knowledge, relevant skills, and network opportunities.

Second, what particular skills do you, or the client, want the participants to gain? At the summer school we wanted the participants to gain a basic understanding of international relations and negotiations and of what kind of influence different types of regimes have. This resulted in a packed program of one week filled with lectures on international relations, policymaking, the two-level game, training in negotiation, visits to institutions and NGOs, meeting diplomats, and a two-day simulation. It taught me an important lesson: Less is more. Packed programs look wonderful, but a lot of the information gets lost. Lectures and meetings need to be relevant to the subject, and there needs to be sufficient time for the participants to process the knowledge and skills gained.

Third, how can you ensure that the knowledge and skills gained resonate with the participants? As discussed by Vivet and Anstey, examples and case studies are excellent in relating theory to reality and applying gained knowledge. Simulations challenge participants to submerge themselves and practice their newly gained skills while thinking on their feet, and they encourage creativity and experimenting with different techniques. Here, as Faltas and Bass have pointed out in these pages, reflection is key. Faltas also emphasizes simplicity, which leads participants to focus on the process rather than the role they are playing. Even more so, I believe, the simulation or game needs to be designed keeping in mind the skills that the participants need to gain. The summer school's simulation focused on linking the constraints of democracy with international diplomacy and negotiation. Therefore, the simulation included changing mandates via secret briefings and incoming news reports. These challenged participants' positions, forcing them to change strategies.

However, most important in setting up these educational and training programs is to ensure that participants build genuine relationships with each other and have fun. Last year's summer school was a pleasure and a great success. For this reason, I am excited to apply the lessons learned and to develop a summer school project even better than last year's. This year I will challenge the participants with a new theme: sustainable diplomacy.

■

Daniel Erdmann

Escaping the Training Trap in Mediation and Conflict Management

This article deals with the challenges of creating a training in mediation and conflict management that is effective and easy for participants to grasp. In my view, trainers should value the individual contexts each student or trainee brings to the table and tailor the training along those truths, using what I refer to as “mindful mediation” as a guideline.

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When we talk about training in mediation and conflict management, we generally find two different types of educational programs: short-term sessions with a very limited time capacity, and long-term studies that cover a wide range of topics and demonstrate greater analytical depth. Trainees or students may ask themselves what these two concepts have in common, and which offers them the educational impact they are looking for. As this is a personal reflection, I am not going to judge or put a value on either concept but will simply explain what has worked for me in the hopes that it makes sense to you.

Through reviewing outside training contents, discussing with trainees their expectations, and witnessing countless attempts to practice our art, it was easy for me to identify one very dominant and resistant issue that most practitioners face: the overwhelming challenge of implementing theoretical concepts, models, and structures to the actual practice of mediation. When I personally faced this challenge for the first time, I immediately started to work on the foundation of what I have come to call “mindful mediation.”

One valuable takeaway is that trainees and practitioners may not need an extensively broad set of tools, but should identify and concentrate on the development of social core competencies – ones that we all practice on a daily basis, but more often outside of the professional scope. Focusing on such competencies, trainees and practitioners learn that we naturally possess and unconsciously use effective skills that simply need to be identified and further developed for work in peacebuilding.

What was needed in the past and continues to be highly relevant in the present is to keep and communicate an open-minded and practice-oriented understanding of mediation, without putting this term (mediation) into an immutable frame or promising any particular outcome. In order to create an authentic practitioner’s personality and have the desired positive impact on the environment, it is crucial to understand that the key to change is to make use of one’s own life experiences. Putting such a concept into practice requires that trainees re-discover and re-develop self-confidence in their own knowledge.

We must support the development of fresh-minded and clear-thinking peacemakers who are longing to initiate positive changes in society. We should avoid releasing people from trainings whose minds we have jam-packed with information but who are afraid of making mistakes and unsure of how to practice what they have learned.

When it comes to the training sessions, the trainer should understand that it is not about content quantity, but rather about learning to work with the life stories, expertise, visions, and capacities of the trainees. While it is quite difficult to plan such a training, trainers' true expertise is indicated by their ability to couch their egos and to align themselves with the specific trainees' competencies and work towards their needs.

I believe it is a great gift to understand what the trainees have to offer, to explain to them a few easy-to-grasp topics that fit their personalities and life stories, and to help mold them into authentic and unique practitioners who are able to put their own personal discoveries from such a training or development process into practice.

We should focus on keeping the training simple and transparent, as the conflict to work on will be complicated enough. "Mindful mediation" is based on the social core competencies of deep listening, critical thinking, and wise speaking.

■

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Peter Kesting

The Many Faces of Emotion

Since 2007 we have been running The Negotiation Challenge (TNC), where we invite teams of three students from leading universities worldwide to meet at one location to negotiate. Last year we were in Kyoto, this year it should have been in Barcelona (and was instead online), and next year it will be in Beijing (we hope that the corona crisis will be history by April 2021). Every event is hosted by a local organizer, which allows for a unique experience of each different location. The day before the challenge is devoted to the annual meeting of the International Negotiation and Teaching Research Association (INTRA), where researchers and experienced practitioners share their work and discuss new insights.

As with case-based challenges, the goal is to select a champion, a winning team. The difference is that students not only work on cases, but also interact with each other. This interaction is perhaps the most interesting part; it gives participants an opportunity to see different cultures "at work." It was during one such interaction that I had a memorable and insightful experience.

Some years ago, when heading one of the rounds, I walked into a room and was shocked to see two teams, one from France and another from South America, standing at the whiteboard shouting at each other, expressing some serious anger. The teams' body language radiated conflict and disagreement; every minute that the situation became tenser represented one minute less to negotiate.

Negotiating in Eikando Monastery, Kyoto 2019
© Peter Kesting

I was apprehensive, worrying that we were encountering a serious conflict that would require a lot of effort to pacify after the negotiation. The teams reached an agreement, literally in the very last minute – and then the unexpected happened: both teams began to laugh, and even hugged each other. It was all just a game.

There are at least three lessons to learn from this episode:

- First, good negotiators are not the ones with black sunglasses and a poker face. Negotiations always involve emotions: I may perceive the other side as pleasant, warm-hearted, cold, aggressive, friendly, etc., and the other side has an emotional perception of me as well. The high art of negotiation involves controlling these emotions and using them fruitfully. Like the teams did.
- Second, there are cultural – and individual – differences. Some people (like me) are scared by too many emotions; for many, a pleasant discussion should be calm and to the point. Others love acting, playing a sort of game with each other, having a lively exchange. There is no right or wrong; people are just different.
- We at TNC have no research insights on this, but our perception is that emotionalism is generally conducive to relationship-building. However, our perception is also that it is time-consuming and moves the focus away from the substance. Emotional teams were good, but often not the top teams.

■

Ida Manton

On Being a Woman: Why Gender Is Still a Topic for Negotiation Analysts and Trainers

As a woman, I have often been the only one on a given team, which has led me to ponder the reasons for this, along with differences in style (if any), perceptions, and content women offer to our participants. I am glad to see more analysis and research on the topic, and here I will try to shed light on some of that work. I will talk for the most part about diplomatic and peace negotiations and mediation, as that is what I mainly study and teach.

This is where we stand and why we still need to talk and do something about it:

> *"Between 1992 and 2018, women constituted 13 percent of negotiators, 3 percent of mediators and only 4 percent of signatories in major peace processes."*[1]

Even today, I cannot single out a female negotiator with the ease that many of us can do when it comes to identifying the successful male negotiators, especially mediators. Women are part of teams, usually in supporting roles. This is because they have historically, unjustly been in weaker power positions. However, the United Nations achieved gender parity among its resident coordinators globally, and in 2018 UN Women reported that women comprised 35 percent of heads and 48 percent of deputy heads of UN peacekeeping and special political missions. The remaining disparity can best be explained by reminding ourselves that women entered the political stage only recently (with a few exceptions throughout history); therefore, the pool of experienced female peace and diplomatic negotiators is very limited. Also, it would be wrong to assume that just because they are female, they a) want to focus on gender in the negotiation process, or b) are capable trainers.

Ida Manton, negotiation skills training at NDC, October 2019
© Ida Manton

I was always interested in gender and the anthropological constructs stemming from our biology, but my eventual turn towards negotiation came much later in life. For a long time, I did not view these two fields as the natural nexus that they have since become for me. A great illustration of this is that I wrote my bachelor's thesis on Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*, not even knowing that Sir Harold Nicolson was very much part of that story and Ms. Woolf's life, through his wife Vita Sackville West. It was only later, when I started studying diplomacy, that I connected these characters living in different folders in my filing cabinet of academic curiosity.

In Yugoslavia, where I grew up, after the Second World War both men and women had access to education and were expected to be part of the rebuilding and participate equally in the workforce. In this way, equality was achieved within two generations, and I was always told that women would have a place in major societal processes as long as they were educated. An interesting anecdote from my studies at Clingendael in 2006 springs to mind: When the head of the Macedonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs came for a visit, accompanied by her political adviser and the ambassador to the Netherlands, my professor asked me, "What do men in your country do?" Only then did I realize all the visiting officials were women. Yet, most of the leaders, decision-makers, and negotiators in the former Yugoslav countries are men. At a time when the traditional, hierarchical decision-making models have been replaced by negotiation (a

1 Data from the Council on Foreign Relations, Women's Participation in Peace Processes, https://www.cfr.org/womens-participation-in-peace-processes/.

horizontal process that brings a variety of actors to the table), it is a great loss to exclude women and their different sets of skills, knowing that we can learn so much about the "hidden opportunities" that come to light when power realities are challenged (more on this can be found in Kolb and Williams 2003).

I became a negotiations trainer along an unconventional career path, as do we all, since there is no specific school for this job. We develop ourselves by acquiring knowledge from many academic fields and reflecting on our personal and professional experiences. I was lucky to be Prof. Meerts' student at Clingendael and to be introduced to this interactive and growing field. I was also fortunate to have been brought up with the belief that women should be educated and educators (I am at least a third-generation female teacher in my family), but by now the gender debate should have become outdated. And yet, it is not, though a lot has been done to bring women to the table and into academia. I hope that my investment in the capacities of other women's negotiation skills will increase their direct participation in peace negotiations, which according to UN Women increases the sustainability and quality of peace. Nevertheless, I am endlessly grateful to have been invited as a lecturer even in traditionally male-dominated settings, such as NATO. For almost a decade I have been teaching at the NATO Defense College (NDC), where in a group of around one hundred mainly military participants, there are often only three to five other women. I believe that by including more women in the academic process we will have a more constructive discussion on inclusivity and the role women play in the conflict cycle. NDC's example should be followed and improved upon by offering more lectures and trainings that deal with gender-relevant aspects of negotiation and effective communication. Gender equality cannot happen without both men and women making the effort. Only then will gender no longer matter and will we be able to concentrate on the particular qualities, energy, and creativity each individual brings to the table.

Warsaw Negotiation Round 2017, negotiation experts/trainers in a working session
© Ida Manton

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Aldís G. Sigurðardóttir

How to Teach Negotiators Not to Use Deceptive Negotiation Tactics

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Over the years, I have researched the topic of negotiation, taught it to both business and law students, trained and coached executives, and led complex negotiations on behalf of my clients. What I have observed in all those activities is the frequent use of deceptive negotiation tactics, and the questions that have been puzzling me are: Why do negotiators feel the need to use deceptive negotiation tactics? What is it exactly that makes them decide to deceive their counterpart? Do they think that in using these tactics they will get more out of the deal in the short term, as they ignore the implications for the relational value and for their reputations? Are they so competitive that they are merely focusing on winning, regardless of the consequences? Is it a cultural issue? Or is it the training/teaching method? Or lack of training/teaching or experience?

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According to the literature, there are various reasons to not use deceptive tactics in negotiations: it is unethical, it can engender an adverse climate and cultivate distrust between parties and, in general, it is a poor strategy. One would think that when the stakes are sufficiently high, negotiators might find themselves tempted to use deceptive tactics to push things in the direction of their preferred outcome. However, what I have observed and experienced is that the stakes need not be high at all for negotiators to use deceptive tactics. It seems like it is considered part of the job.

Moreover, according to the literature, the majority of negotiators have used deceptive tactics and have even lied in negotiations. Almost all of them believe that they have been deceived or lied to by their counterparts. Now, what is the difference between lying and deceiving? According to Bani et al. (2014), lying is characterized as providing incorrect information or promising something that you know you will not follow through on, while deception entails going behind your counterpart's back by, for example, gathering information that benefits you from a third party or using an unnecessarily tight deadline to force a quick agreement.

Regarding the idea that deceptive tactics are used by those who lack training or experience, I refer to my own students in one of the negotiation training programs that I teach. I train my students quite hectically for negotiation competitions, and they know that they should not lie. They know it just as well as they know my name and what time practice starts. We meet for several hours every week from September through March, going through case exercises, reflection sessions, and discussions. Very early on in the training sessions, I emphasize the importance of honesty and using ethically acceptable tactics, and I have strict rules/penalties regarding lying and deceiving. It is simply forbidden. Yet, they still always use deceptive tactics! I wonder if people generally do not care, or if they simply do not realize the consequences of their behavior.

Yes, it can be a cultural issue – what is acceptable in one culture might not be appropriate in another. Being an experienced negotiator does not necessarily mean that one is an excellent negotiator, and, from what I have learned discussing this issue with students and executives who use deceptive tactics, they do it to be on top in the heat of the moment, not considering the consequences.

The observed fact, both from international negotiation competitions and from my training sessions, has revealed that using deceptive tactics more often than not backfires and does not yield a better outcome for those using these tactics. Using such tactics or lying in negotiations can only be beneficial if the deceit goes undetected. I wonder why negotiators are willing to take this risk, when my observations have consistently shown that the truth will most likely come out eventually. Thus, by being ethical and honest, negotiators create trust and relational value; using strategies to prevent being lied to or deceived, such as asking the same question in various ways, can help negotiators yield better outcomes and preserve their precious reputations.

■

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Serge Wynen

Enabling Confidence in Negotiation

As I reflect on what I have learned in fifteen years of negotiation training across a wide variety of international organizations, I can summarize what works in three general points.

Clarifying the Objectives and Purpose

The objectives of a negotiation workshop are too often set only in general terms. It is relatively easy for experienced negotiation trainers to share their expertise of basic negotiation principles and techniques while remaining flexible regarding the method, content, and exercises depending on the particular participants. In taking such a generic, almost improvised approach, a trainer misses opportunities to co-create more value for the team and for the organization and its broader stakeholder system. Exploring and clarifying the objective, purpose, and context with the key stakeholders before designing and delivering a negotiation workshop is invaluable. This joint exploration allows the parties to reflect on the core issues with which they need to engage; it also facilitates their contemplation of the specific challenges they are facing and of the specific competences they need to develop in light of those challenges. Negotiation training is an opportunity to engage and build confidence with stakeholders.

Clarifying Behavioral Expectations

A negotiation workshop includes participants from different institutions, organizations, or teams. Alternatively, it can be for the members of a specific unit or team within the organization. Whatever the composition of the target group, it pays to invest time in clarifying behavioral expectations with the group from the onset. This might be viewed as a waste of time by some in the group who are eager to dive into learning techniques. But we must first create a safe place for participants to experiment and learn effective behaviors, processes, roles, and group dynamics. These two interests can be reconciled creatively. An initial exercise – for example, finding a consensus on the definition of negotiation – can be an opportunity for building rapport, sharing interests, questioning assumptions, exploring options, finding compromises, and building confidence.

Building Self-Awareness and Awareness of Others

How can we help participants of a negotiation workshop raise their levels of awareness and confidence? Understanding how the tensions in a negotiation are affecting them and us personally is often a good starting point. People coming into a workshop bring their own biases, assumptions, styles, and various degrees of self-awareness and awareness of others. How do we ensure they leave with more awareness, feeling more confident in their negotiations? How can a team leader or chair of a working group become more aware of the impact of her/his behaviors or attitudes on group results? Building awareness enables more choice for any given party. Every experience in the safety of a training

© Serge Wynen

workshop can be a meta-learning opportunity. Each simulation exercise is an opportunity for specific reflection, feedback, and raising awareness. Making the link between what happened in the exercise and what is happening in the broader system can be an empowering moment, a step towards initiating behavioral changes that deliver better results and more confidence. Approaching each negotiation workshop with more clarity of intent and purpose enables us to role-model the attitudes, behaviors, and words that build confidence in negotiation.

■

VI CULTURE IN TRAINING

William W. Baber

Japanese Audiences in Negotiation Training

Cross-cultural interaction comes freighted with concerns about the self and others. Perceptions count, as do actions. When training Japanese in negotiation, I teach in English with the understanding that I am training not only universal negotiation skills, but also skills to manage the styles and expectations of international counterparties. A balance must be proposed in the training: on one hand, I recognize specific needs of Japanese trainees; on the other, I partially equip them to interact with potentially any culture and expect them to fill in the details.

Similarly, the trainer must be ready to meet and adjust to specifics of the Japanese audience. Some widely noted specifics about Japan include strong preferences by Japanese learners not to speak in front of the group and not to risk losing face. Also, weak foreign-language skills are common.

If these points are even roughly true, we can and must design training accordingly. The following are three issues to consider based on my personal experience training Japanese businesspeople in MBA and EMBA settings.

Build *Anshin*

A feeling of comfort in the classroom is important to all but the most self-confident students. In Japan we can access confidence by building *anshin*. The word refers to a feeling of security in social contexts, a confidence in not being embarrassed in front of others. To promote *anshin*, students should be given expectations of low-pressure situations. Additionally, they should receive key concepts in written form in advance, readings that are not lengthy or complex, and, if possible, video material showing procedures and the (hopefully) understandable speech of the educator. In order to decrease nervousness and increase confidence in the process, expectations about forming groups and interacting with peers should be clarified.

The language barrier raises affective barriers and decreases *anshin*. Providing in advance pre-reading/pre-listening materials, handouts, and short hands-on exercises is an ideal method to increase the feeling of *anshin*.

Build Rapport

Building up rapport with a group of trainees is probably high on the list of design parameters of educators everywhere. With Japanese trainees, we can dispense with self-deprecating jokes and personal, humanizing stories since trainers and educators are expected to occupy a position above the students. For their part, the students want educators to display skill and experience worthy of their respect. Messaging that students will not be evaluated based on grammar or language skills will help. Indications, no matter how light, of appreciation for Japanese culture or history also tend to improve the classroom atmosphere.

Build Relevance

It is often demotivating to Japanese students to face names and historical events they do not recognize. Only the largest non-Japanese brands, e.g. Nike and Apple, tend to be known. Even Walmart operates under a local name and does not carry the same weight as it does in other countries.

My colleague M. Sarata prepares learners with Western tools and Japanese context
© William W. Baber

Japanese audiences are not quick to transfer to their own situation learnings gleaned from cases about foreign firms or governments. Rather than searching out similar characteristics and learning points, they are more likely to ask what the situation has got to do with them. The answer is to use simulations and cases based in Japan or involving Japanese firms overseas. These can be based on real-world cases or invented out of whole cloth but must include Japanese business context.

■

Larry Crump

In the Beginning

Everyone seemed to travel to Japan to study Japanese management in the 1980s, including me. Yet after 125 field interviews, I came to realize how little I understood about Japan and the Japanese, so in 1986 I decided to remain in Tokyo. Meaningful employment did not appear immediately; I therefore presented myself as an international management consultant, which can be analogous to being unemployed – just more hopeful and slightly more ambitious.

Eventually, I was properly introduced to Fujitsu – IBM's primary competitor at that time – and eventually invited to teach international negotiation in a predeparture training program at their Mt. Fuji training center. Until Japan caught my fancy I had studied and practiced social work in the United States, which is to say that I had an excellent understanding of conflict and its management vis-à-vis individuals, groups, communities, and society. I had never imagined that this knowledge was relevant to something called "negotiation."

How does one prepare for such an opportunity? I had never been part of a negotiation program as a student, teacher, or trainer. I spent several hundred dollars on negotiation books to build my first negotiation training program. I had no experience using experiential exercises at that time, although I did know how to build lectures, introduce case material, and form discussion groups to conduct case analysis. It will come as no surprise that my first negotiation training program was not ideal – but Fujitsu did not know that, and neither did I.

Near the Fujitsu Mt. Fuji training center
© Pixabay/kazu-001

Establishing a negotiation training product also requires that the product be priced. At that moment, I was concerned with gaining experience, so I told my potential client that I was sure that Fujitsu must have an established compensation system for training contractors and that I would be pleased to fit into their framework. Learning how to price a training product came later.

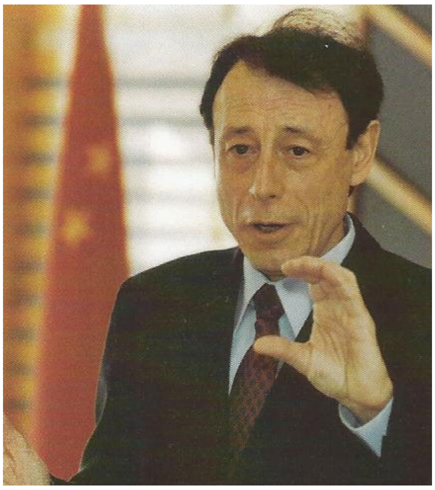
Once in the training room, however, I quickly gained firsthand experience in the cultural differences between Americans and Japanese. Discussions that would easily develop and flow in the United States were not forthcoming in Japan. Experienced Japanese managers seemed unwilling to express their views unless they consulted their colleagues first. The solution was small-group discussions followed by full-group discussions, but this approach required additional time, so the proposed training program had to be reduced to accommodate this training technique. Might the client complain? Fortunately, no.

At the time, I had no idea that I was embarking upon a new profession. I will be forever grateful to Fujitsu for pointing me down a path that has led to a very fulfilling career in negotiation teaching, training, and research. ■

Guy-Olivier Faure

Training in China: Playing in Earnest

I started training Chinese managers and executives in Beijing in 1990. At that time, many people were still wearing the Sun Yat-sen blue suit. They were working in state-owned enterprises that were usually organized in a military-like structure and generally of quite substantial size by Western standards, with several hundred thousand employees. Although this was after the death of Mao, things were still arduous and tough. Daily life was a permanent hassle. For instance, air-conditioning was not common and temperatures in July could reach 40 degrees Celsius. In winter, I had to work wearing gloves and seven layers of clothes. At the macro level, I had to cope with oxymorons such as the opening policy, the socialist market economy, and many more of these Chinese intricacies.



Guy-Olivier Faure during a China–European Union training program in Beijing
© Guy-Olivier Faure

I was delivering a mixture of lectures, case studies, and simulations. I had enough credibility with the audience because I had already published quite a few papers in the domain of international negotiation. I was introduced as a university professor from the Sorbonne, Paris, which I believe won me a lot of respect because, even in a communist context, the Confucian cultural norm of valuing individual, distinguished scholars prevailed. However, at the end of the first program, they let me know politely that lectures were great but that simulations were games for children, not for people with high responsibilities like them.

In the past thirty years, many things have changed in China, including the mindset of the Chinese leaders and managers. Western ways of thinking and methods of management and education have slowly gained popularity. Gradually, I started to make headway once again with simulations; the whole process went through three stages for the participants:

- Stage 1: As disciplined and dutiful people, they played along.
- Stage 2: As smart people, they understood there was a lot to learn from doing.
- Stage 3: As “modern” people, they accepted the idea that learning could also be entertaining.

However, I still had to deal with two major obstacles. The first one related to commitment. The training programs were residential and lasted three days. At the end of the second day, after playing a prisoner’s dilemma scenario, I realized they were still arguing over the game during the evening dinner, blaming their counterparts for not cooperating. The next morning at breakfast, the arguments were still going on. They were caught in an escalation process. I had to convince them that a simulation was no more than a game and should not be taken too seriously. They were not enacting a life or death issue.

The second problem was of a cultural nature, it was about face-saving. A Chinese person cannot lose face, especially in public – the audience here consisted of sometimes more than 100 participants. My biggest challenge was to demonstrate that there was no loser, quite a difficult job with simulations such as the dollar auction, where some people would spend 100 dollars to buy a ten-dollar banknote. I had to do it the Chinese way, playing yin-yang, which entails showing that the loser has not really lost because every event carries its opposite. Thus, after Confucius, Laozi appeared too. Tradition and modernity were meeting again.

■

Joana Matos

It Is Not Enough to Know the Rules of the Game, the Other Party Must Be Willing to Play

I was teaching negotiations to a class of students from the Gender Equality Studies and Training Programme at the University of Iceland, and the students had specifically asked if I could give them some guidance on salary negotiations.

That was not a topic mentioned on the outline for this one-day training, but I made some time at the end to wrap up the day's learning in the context of salary negotiations and allow for their questions. What I did not know at that point was that approximately 70 percent of my students were women coming from cities in Africa where more than 1,000 people routinely applied for each job.

One of these women even went on to say that she was required to turn in a list of her monthly expenses in order to justify asking for a salary raise. Ouch. I did not see that coming, and honestly did not know what sort of good advice I could possibly give her!

This context rendered most of my advice obsolete, as there was little to no possibility for these women to negotiate for much of anything; it takes two to tango and even though I had taught them some good dance steps, their cultural reality did not even allow for a dance.

What this taught me was that context is everything: despite our best intentions as trainers, not all content is applicable to all contexts and it is important to make that clear from the beginning and adjust students' expectations.

Cultural Awareness

I love traveling and meeting people from different countries, so when I was invited to teach a seminar in Armenia I was quite excited. The training was on short notice, and there was a lot of preparation to be done, so I admit to not spending the usual amount of time I generally do when teaching in a country I have never been to before, instead prioritizing the training content.

Armenia 2019
© Joana Matos

Armenia 2019
© Joana Matos

I arrived in Armenia and went straight to an ongoing training for the same individuals I would be teaching the next day so I could get a "feel" for the group. There, I realized they did not speak English and seemed generally quite unengaged, so the next morning, with the help of two interpreters, I made it a mission to keep them interested and engaged through a lot of interaction despite the added difficulty of simultaneous interpretation in both directions.

During one of our exercises, I had asked people to sit two and two together. As I was happily going around checking if we could start, I approached one of the men, touching him lightly on his shoulder to ask if he was ready to start. He jumped out of his chair as if he had sat on a spike and stormed out of the room. I was taken by surprise and felt extremely bad, as I immediately realized that he did not fancy me touching him and that I should have known better!

Being Portuguese by birth, I do have a tendency to touch people – it is stronger than me; even after more than a decade living in Iceland, I still have to fight the urge. But, like they say, "When in doubt, keep them (your hands) out!" ■

Siniša Vuković

Learning the Subtle Impact of Culture in Negotiations

Among many challenges associated with teaching (and training) the art and science of international negotiations, the most intricate might be the task of instilling in the participants the theory and practice of intercultural communication. Useful benchmarks, which no curriculum can ignore, can certainly be found in now-classic works by Gert Hofstede, Edward T. Hall, and Richard D. Lewis. They offer useful abstractions of culture through well-known concepts and notions. As a result, participants learn the differences between "high- and low-context cultures" and are exposed to the nuanced nature of various "cultural dimensions" that may help them understand the value of hierarchies in certain societies, why some cultures value accomplishment more than anything, how reliant a group is on predefined rules, how much group affiliation defines an individual's preferences and priorities, and why some cultures value and encourage cynicism over optimism. Similarly, they may learn of different options for time management, from linear to cyclical and multi-active. In order to better comprehend all these enticing and thought-provoking ideas, participants may ask for (or offer their own) examples illustrating real-life anecdotal evidence. And yes, all this is done while threading a fine line between generalization and stereotyping – an inherent pitfall for anyone venturing into the fuzzy field of cultural studies.

Yet, the real puzzle emerges when planning for a proper exercise or simulation where those participating can actually test the extent of their learning experience. Simulating culture is nearly impossible. Biases, misconceptions, oversimplifications, and misinformed extrapolations all have the tendency to harden and to hijack any meaningful attempt at practicing cross-cultural communication. Moreover, to understand culture requires unpacking one's own highly intuitive actions or disentangling implied assumptions. Understandably, such self-reflections are difficult to channel and structure in an engaging manner, especially if they involve several participants. Paradoxically, even though each participant carries a distinct blend of various cultures based on her/his life experiences, s/he is also unable to express those features in an explicit and purposeful manner. As soon as it is intentional, culture gets absorbed by bounded rationality.

From years of experience, I have found one particular game to be an excellent solution for all these dilemmas. Barnga, a game of cards developed in 1980 by Sivasailam "Thiagi" Thiagarajan while he was working for USAID in Liberia, offers a unique perspective into the invisible layers of culturally charged behavior.[1] The version I have adopted creates extreme impediments to any form of verbal communication. On occasion I even ask participants to use face masks in order to prevent even lip-reading. The game is conducted in complete silence, and participants are allowed to signal their message only through hand gestures and other forms of body movement. The trick of the game is that participants play their cards using slightly different rules at each table. As they move from table to table, depending on whether they won or lost in previous rounds, they are faced with what they perceive as unconventional behavior by others at the table. Trying to signal their discontent with their performance, participants resort to gestures they believe are commonsensical, intuitive, and comprehensive. Without knowing it, they start expressing their genuine cultural imprint. To paraphrase Edouard Herriot's famous exclamation, culture is what remains when one has forgotten everything else.

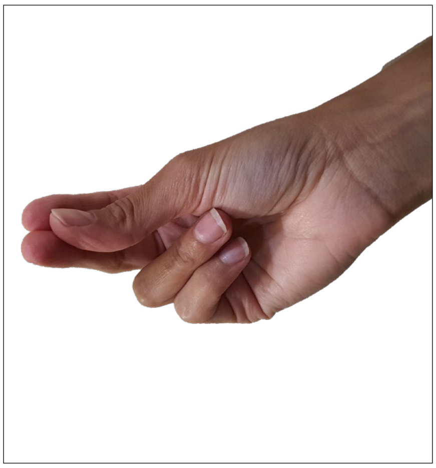
Participants' non-verbal cues gradually start generating confusion, which morphs into discontent, only to result in outright frustration with the uncertainty and opaqueness of the unfolding circumstances. A signal they believe is logical is not acted upon by others as they had hoped. A signal they get from others has no purpose in this situation. Time gets wasted in trying to clarify the situation, as additional gestures only muddy the waters. As we debrief the game, participants start realizing that the real problem was not in the covert decision to make the rules slightly different for each table. The real problem was their assumption that their signaling of this issue would be irrefutably understandable to everyone else. Through the debrief, they become aware of how their assumptions, choices, attitudes, and reactions emanate strong cultural signs. These signals prevent them from communicating properly, as each one expects others to follow and emulate what

1 For those unfamiliar with the game, a short description can be found here: https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/inclusive-teaching/2017/07/10/barnga/.

they believe is normal, natural, commonsensical. On several occasions, I have seen true deadlocks that, upon brief reflection in the debrief, became utterly comical for all participants. A student trying to signal “OK” uses the same symbol that others think indicates the number three. For some, the same gesture implies the number zero, and they get further confused. To add another layer, a participant from Brazil finds this message highly offensive and insulting, as it represents the equivalent of a middle finger for Europeans and Americans. Finally, a Japanese person is completely confused, as they see it as a symbol for money.

A sign with many meanings: OK, zero, three, money, and even an insult
© Siniša Vuković

In another example, a participant from China trying to indicate the number seven (as the highest card) further confuses the Italian participant who reads that sign as a non-verbal expression for “What are you trying to say?”



Chinese sign for seven, Italian sign for “What do you mean?”
© Siniša Vuković

A participant from Japan tries to signal seven as well, with two fingers (index and middle) from one hand gently tapping on the open palm of the other, only to see the message get completely lost in translation.

Japanese sign for seven
© Siniša Vuković

It is from this self-reflection that one can learn the true impact of culture in communication. Learning how to listen to what others are trying to say, reading the signals the way they are intended to be read, and mirroring their behavior in order to create reciprocity, which is the baseline of trust – all of this becomes clear as the debrief goes on. Studying how to effectively communicate in intercultural environments might take countless iterations of this exercise. Yet, recognizing that all that we do, think, and expect is inherently conditioned by our cultural biases is the first step in overcoming those same prejudices. Learning how others signal their intentions is a step in the right direction.

■

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Book Reviews: A Bag of Tricks

Research into processes of negotiation over the past half century, since the groundbreaking works of Schelling (1960), Ikle (1964), Walton and McKersie (1965), and others, has been focused on finding the basic pattern(s) of negotiation processes by distilling regularities found in actual practice, in line with the scientific norm of parsimony. The actors are parties, often states, and when they are broken up or down, it is into groups (more parties), as in two-level negotiations. Thereafter, analyses of various aspects, like ornaments on a Christmas tree, can be added in their places. This approach was adopted as a corrective to two earlier approaches: the book-of-proverbs approach of de Callières (2002 [1716]) and company, which highlighted all the decorative elements of good negotiation but saw no underlying tree, and the economics approach of Edgeworth (1881), Zeuthen (1930), and others, which saw only a parsimonious tree. This is a caricature of the approaches, of course, but a good caricature can simplify and magnify salient traits.

To continue the caricature, a new approach has entered, or re-entered, the scene of negotiation analysis, one in which we turn away from the tree with its branches and instead highlight the multitude of personal behavioral items hanging on it. Current examples are widely diverse, therefore immensely rich, and as such broaden and enrich the whole field of negotiation analysis. Three of them need to be highlighted with a review: Chris Honeyman and Andrea Kupfer Schneider (eds) (2017), *The Negotiator's Desk Reference*; Hervé Cassan and Marie-Pierre de Bailliencourt (2019), *Traité Pratique de Négociation*; and Boniface Nkobena (forthcoming), *Becoming a Total Quality Negotiator* (simultaneously available in French).

The Negotiator's Desk Reference has 101 chapters over 1,480 pages; it is a nearly infinite collection of aspects of negotiation practice, with contributions from more than eighty analysts and practitioners; the latter are largely lawyers, as are both editors, and the books grew out of an American Bar Association project by the same editors, *The Negotiator's Fieldbook* (2006). The three collections assembled by Honeyman and Schneider are monumental works and should serve as any negotiator's or analyst's pillow at night and cushion by day. It is all there: a hologram of every conceivable angle of the whole process of negotiation. While there are discussions of various notions of the process itself, they are merely a few among the many angles and aspects, and they do not govern all the other angles and aspects or capture a single process. There is no way to succinctly summarize the philosophy or gestalt of the work except to say that it is a comprehensive treatment of a highly complex process. Additional readings are offered.

A work of similar magnitude, 365 pages, *Traité Pratique de Négociation* is shaped by the formative experiences of its two authors – respectively, a former chef de cabinet for Boutros Boutros-Ghali and a former sherpa for Kofi Annan at the UN – who have gone on to work in academia and in business. The book is a guide for a negotiator's every thought and action, couched in the first person of the negotiator. This volume delineates every pebble of the multiple paths that can be taken. Different from *Desk Reference*, the idea of a conceptualized process is not only avoided in *Traité Pratique*, it is rejected altogether: "Each negotiation responds to an original and unique process […]. Negotiation is, above all, a procedural creation; the negotiator is, first of all, an inventor of procedure" (135). The scenarios that precede and follow are pertinent, detailed, packed with knowledge – almost scripted – and contain the questions that a negotiator should be asking at every juncture of the process, accompanied by the ensuing implications and consequences. Reference lists include a relevant spectrum in both French and English.

Becoming a Total Quality Negotiator is the first negotiation book that I know of to come out of Africa, and it is available in French and English, befitting Cameroon as the country of authorship. The author is a long-time professor at the International Relations Institute of Cameroon (IRIC). Here, too, the focus, as the title indicates, is on the negotiator: schools and developments in the evolution of negotiation discussion are brushed past, and fuller attention is given to many aspects of language, logic, process, tactics, and errors in negotiating exchanges (down to the importance of smell). Again, "no simple model or set of techniques is a panacea, nor can one be prescribed. The application of any technique varies from one context to another" (237). African writing on negotiation gets short shrift, despite the large and growing literature on the African approach to conflict resolution. The references in general need updating.

The common thrust of these works is the negotiator. It is s/he who makes the process, as *Traité Pratique* says. For all four (or five) books, the purpose is to elucidate the paths available to the negotiator as s/he chooses the way to proceed, depending on the many features of context the various authors describe. *Traité Pratique* adopts a specific approach involving the multitude of possible component elements (termed "items") revolving around "What can I do?" rather than "What should I do?", leaving the negotiator then to decide. These items are organized into persons, processes, and problems, not reduced to basic principles but grouped simply for presentation, like the bottom branches of a game theory tree. The authors' concern is action and consequences. *Total Quality* structures its analytical points according to language, logic, and level (stages) and is somewhat more interested in identifying the elements than in considering the choices these elements offer the negotiator. Much of the analysis is on international politics, where the actor is the state rather than its personal agent. The approach of *Desk Reference* and *Fieldbook* falls between the *Traité Pratique* and *Total Quality*, grouping the discussion by types of situations or larger questions that a negotiator might encounter, focusing therein on specific topics for analysis and action.

Much depends on the negotiator's personality; negotiators are born, not made, says de Callières, although negotiators and trainers as a whole have since transcended that attitude. *Traité Pratique* takes personality more into account as a relevant variable than do the other two works, but beyond personality it pays a lot of attention to questions that the negotiator should be asking about him/herself, followed by similar in-depth probing about the Other and then the Others – third parties, a unique feature that is key to its approach. By contrast, much negotiation literature begins at the other end, on the problem of conflict, leaving the negotiator outside consideration; *Traité Pratique* begins by declaring that all negotiations are the same in that they are all *sui generis* and that, therefore, the individualized inquiries ("What can I do?") are universally relevant. *Desk Reference* chapters raise their focus a notch from the individual to the types of situations as the framework for evaluating negotiator behavior, with very savvy insights, whereas *Total Quality* briefly lays out its bag of tricks and tools and evaluates them, for the negotiators, *caveat utilitor*.

All this is not to say that negotiation analysis does not pay attention to the negotiator as a choosing entity. Legal studies and, of course, psychological analyses often focus on the actor, and rational choice focuses on the choice rather than the chooser, to the point of making the choice obvious and the actor irrelevant. But the attention in these works proceeds from the negotiator – the agent – who is the independent variable everywhere, item by item, situation by situation, trick by tool. It takes us back to de Callières (and company), a round trip enriched by the analytical passages through which negotiation analysis has traveled, to meet the agent in all her/his complexity. The negotiator is the challenged actor, the creator, not the bystander or even the role player.

All this is refreshing to the analyst and guiding to the practitioner, and draws our attention back to negotiation as an inter- and intra-personal venture. It does not invalidate the ongoing angles of analysis but enriches them, bringing out an oft-forgotten dimension. Unfortunately, negotiation analysis is not a hologram: it is hard to combine a state- or problem-centered analysis with an actor-centered investigation without losing the focal coherence of each. And that is why – perhaps paradoxically – focus on the negotiator is such an important dimension.

The authors are doubtless not at the end of their life's work. Nkobena promises more, using his table of contents as a guide to new cases. Cassan and de Bailliencourt are at work on a sequel with a number of contributors. It is hard to imagine that the energy of Honeyman and Schneider will have been exhausted, although their topic may be, for the moment. I have always said to classes that I am working to inspire and to audiences that I am trying to motivate that the exciting thing about negotiation as a topic (and a practice) is that it is never exhausted and always open to new discoveries. Here we go!

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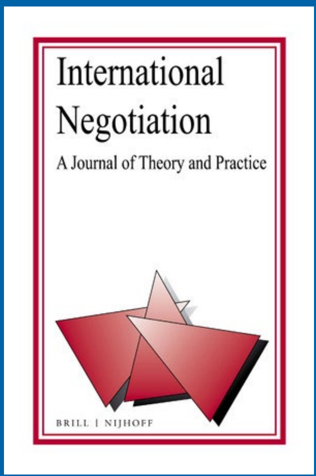

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