

*Thought for the day – 33*

**‘KISS’**

In negotiation, when we build a case for our point of view we frequently make the mistake of assembling a long list of arguments in support of our position. Unfortunately, a case is only as strong as the weakest in a long list of arguments. If, in a negotiation, we put all these arguments on the table, a shrewd negotiator will pick on the weakest and use this to crack open our position.

The most effective approach to a negotiation is to have one very strong reason in support of a position and to use only this argument in the negotiation. Other arguments may be developed in the planning stage but they should not be used in the face-to-face negotiation unless the strongest argument was found to be flawed.

There are times when it is better not to have any arguments in support of your position. A simple example may explain this point:

A retail buyer negotiating with a supplier quite simply said, ‘Your price is too high’. This is a very powerful line to take in a negotiation, its power coming from its simplicity. The salesman knew that he would have no choice but to discuss his price. Unfortunately, the buyer then went on to say, ‘At that price, I can’t make my margin’. The salesman was then able to discuss all of the alternative courses of action open to the buyer which would allow him to make his margin, other than lowering the cost price.

There is a very old mnemonic, KISS. It stands for Keep It Simple, Stupid. It is a good line to take in negotiation. The simpler the argument the more powerful it is, the more complicated the argument the more opportunity your opponent has to find flaws in it.

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*This thought has been taken from Eric’s book ‘Mastering Negotiations’. A master negotiator himself, he is our expert trainer on the subject – click [here](#) for details of one of his most popular courses.*

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