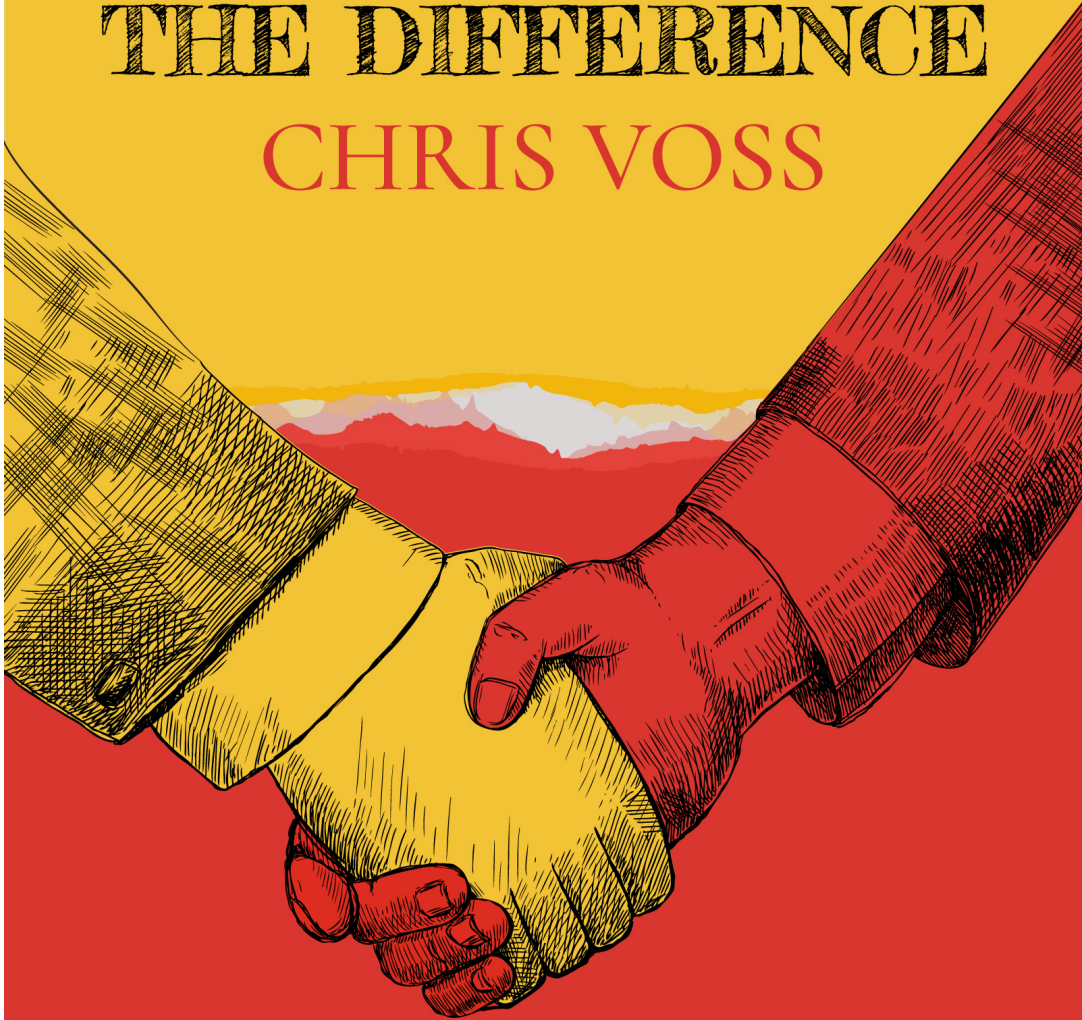


SUMMARY  
NEVER SPLIT  
THE DIFFERENCE  
CHRIS VOSS



# **Summary of «Never Split the Difference» by Chris Voss**

Written by Lea Schullery

The how-to guide for learning the secrets of negotiation from the FBI's lead negotiator, implement the techniques and learn how to always get what you want.

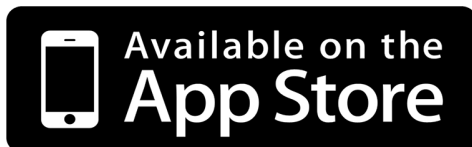


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# Introduction

If you find yourself failing to convince your partner to go try the new restaurant in town or convincing your boss that you deserve a raise, then it's time to learn Chris Voss's tips on how to master negotiating and never compromise. As humans, we have an innate desire to want things, and when you negotiate successfully, you can always get what you want. Sounds too good to be true, right? Throughout his career as the lead FBI hostage negotiator, Chris is letting you in on the secrets on how to become the greatest negotiator and the smartest person in the room. But, it's not easy, it takes time, patience, and practice, but if you apply the techniques, you can learn to never compromise or never split the difference.

# You Want What You Want

You might think that negotiating is only for those big-wigs business people that are out making million-dollar deals, or people going on Shark Tank to try and negotiate a deal to make their business take off, right? Well, you'd be wrong. Think about it, you're negotiating every day with your spouse, friends, colleagues, even your kids. You want to convince your spouse to go to the new restaurant, but your spouse wants to go to your usual spot. Or you want your kids to go to bed at 9:00, but they want to go to bed at 10:00. How do you convince the people in your life to do what you want? You negotiate.

Now, you can learn how to negotiate so you never have to settle. The first step is realizing that everyone operates with a simple, animalistic urge of I want. And sometimes when you want something, you throw away rational thought and operate solely on emotion. There are many negotiating techniques, but many become flawed because they assume that people can overcome that raw, animalistic emotion. They operate on the idea that you can separate the problem from the person. This is simply untrue because we as humans operate under what is known as a cognitive bias which makes us unconsciously irrational.

So how do you work with people that are both emotional and irrational? Accept the human condition that our brains drive us but not in the way that you are expected to think. Psychologist Daniel Kahneman proved that the brain has two systems of thinking. First is the fast-thinking, instinctual mind that deals with emotions. The second is the slow, logical and rational process. However, the first system is far more influential and affects the rational part when it eventually kicks in. In other words, the human brain is irrational.

The framing effect becomes the most powerful cognitive bias that affects how people think. People will react depending on how the situation is framed. By creating the right context surrounding something, you can get

the reaction you are looking for. Think about toddlers, they are the most emotional and irrational negotiators and pitch fits and throw tantrums when they don't get what they want. Negotiating with toddlers is hard. Imagine walking around the store with toddler Penny, who finds the perfect toy to take home. She comes up to you with the "best toy ever." You know you can't get that toy for her, but you also know that if you say no then a temper tantrum will ensue in the middle of the store. So you think about your options. You calmly tell Penny that if she puts the toy back then she can have more money to get ice cream with her friend later during their play-date. You explain Penny's options and she slowly begins to put the toy back on the shelf. You succeeded! But why? Because you simply framed the situation to get the reaction that you desired.

# The Power of “No”

How do you feel when you hear the word ‘no’? One of the biggest fears of most negotiators is hearing that two-letter word that brings up feelings of failure and frustration. ‘No’ sounds like the end, there’s nothing else. But, Voss explains that the short horrible word is solid gold to the world’s top negotiators. Why? Because ‘no’ allows you to see your counterparty’s comfort, and they can only move forward when they are comfortable. It instantly clarifies what the other side wants, and thus begins the real negotiations.

But hearing ‘yes’ too soon can be just as terrible to hear. Think about a pushy salesman trying to sell you something you absolutely don’t need. Saying ‘no’ gives you power and control, but only temporarily. Eventually, you might give in and resign to saying ‘yes’ just to end the conversation. It becomes an escape route to get out of the situation as quickly as possible. So while hearing ‘no’ can feel like a dead-end, there is much more meaning behind hearing the word ‘no’ instead of ‘yes.’ No can mean a variety of things like “I’m uncomfortable, I can’t agree yet, I don’t understand, I’d actually like something else, I need more information, or even, I want to confer with someone else.” Instead of getting to ‘yes,’ Voss learned the goldmine of hearing ‘no.’

At the end of the day, ‘no’ doesn’t mean the negotiation is over. In fact, it opens up opportunities to gain more information and build a rapport with your counterpart. Think of ‘no’ as an opportunity to learn more and think of a better deal.





















# Throw Out the Golden Rule

Treat everyone the way you wish to be treated. Sounds pretty good, right? Well, that type of thinking will get you thrown to the wolves in any negotiation. You don't get what you want by revealing how you wish to be treated, instead, you want to treat others the way others want to be treated and reveal the other side's negotiation style to drive the best bargain. But how can you do this?

In any deal-making agreement, you want to come out swinging and begin with Extreme Anchors. Opening with an extreme anchor means beginning with an outrageous price that you know your opponent will never accept, but by doing this you get an edge. You can now determine the negotiation style of your opponent, which is the real gold in any negotiation, and use it to your advantage. Let's take a look at the main negotiation styles and the traits associated with each one:

- **Accommodators:** these negotiators love to build relationships, exchange information, and are seeking a win-win. They love to talk, aren't overly prepared, and their silence is anger.
- **Assertive:** these negotiators believe that time is money, and they enjoy getting things done. They believe respect is important, they need to be heard, and they speak through silence.
- **Analysts:** these negotiators are methodical, they take the time to get it right. They hate surprises, they are skeptical, and they enjoy silence so they can think.

The most important thing to remember is that you cannot force your negotiation style onto your opponent. Thinking your opponent will be just like you will become detrimental when trying to make a deal. Instead, take your time and study your opponent, anticipate what your opponent is going to do next and you'll surely walk out sealing the deal you want.

# Identify the Black Swan

On the morning of June 17, 1981, thirty-seven-year-old William Griffin left his parent's house in Rochester, New York, but not before he grabbed his shotgun, issuing three shots that killed his mother and a handyman and injuring his step-father. As he jogged the streets of the city, he shot a workman and two bystanders before he entered the local bank. Taking nine employees hostage, he ordered the customers to leave. While on the phone with negotiators, the bank employee stated that Griffin wanted the police to come to the doors and kill him or else he would start killing hostages by 3:00.

Griffin gave a deadline. Negotiators at the time knew that never in the United States history had a hostage-taker killed a hostage at the deadline. Instead, hostage-takers wanted something. They wanted money, power, something. So, negotiators had thirty-minutes to respond but their calls into the bank were futile, Griffin never picked up. At 3:00 Griffin ordered 29-year-old Margaret Moore to move to the front of the bank and aimed his shotgun. With no remorse, he issued two shots into Moore's stomach leaving police and negotiators stunned.

This had never happened before, what did Griffin want? Incidents like this are what Chris Voss considers Black Swans. The term has become synonymous with information that is outside our expectations and predictions. In the Griffin case, they didn't predict that Griffin was on a suicide mission, they assumed he wanted money, but they were wrong and it cost the life of single-mother Margaret Moore. To ensure situations like this don't happen again Chris believes we must search for the Black Swans or the unknown unknowns.

How can you find these Black Swans? By looking at the world through your opponent's eyes. What is their world view? Their religion? The answers to these questions can unlock the key to identifying the Black Swans and making a successful negotiation. By identifying these unknown unknowns,

you can increase your leverage in a deal. Once you know more than the other side thinks you know, you can leverage those black swans and put yourself in the position of power.

Put yourself in your opponent's shoes, know their morals and their missions, and you can determine the unknown unknowns of any deal.

## **Bend Their Reality**

How many times have you found yourself walking out of deal unhappy with the outcome? Perhaps you wanted to get that car for a few thousand dollars less, or you ended up compromising more than you intended. Why do you make these deals that you aren't necessarily happy with? Maybe you felt rushed, you became tired and resigned to a compromise that was less than desirable. Chris wants to remind you to never rush and never compromise. When you compromise, you split the difference, you never want to split the difference. Instead, you want to bend the reality for your opponent.

Timelines and deadlines are crucial elements of any negotiation and are a great way to bend reality for the counterparty. Why do you think businesses always offer deals that include a deadline? If you feel rushed, you'll become more likely to do or say impulsive things that are not in your best interest. Deadlines make you worry about potentially losing out on a great deal. In reality, deadlines are mostly subjective and almost always flexible. Negotiators like Chris resist the urge to give in to the pressures of a deadline and use its power to influence the opponent.

Another way to bend reality is through the concept of "fairness." What makes you accept the deal from the salesman when buying a new car? Because you think it's fair, if you didn't think it was fair, you would simply walk away, right? For example, Chris describes the "proposer and acceptor" theory to prove his point. Assume a proposer is given \$10 to split between himself and the acceptor. If the acceptor refuses the offer, the \$10 is returned to a third party, and neither the proposer nor the acceptor receives any money. Results show that any offer less than \$5 each is usually rejected. If the offer is less than \$2, the acceptor becomes insulted and will more than likely turn the offer down.

So what does this prove? That our emotions play a role in decision-making. Both the proposer and acceptor started without any money, and if thought about rationally, accepting \$1 is better than nothing. However, since the

deal seems unfair, both parties would rather walk away with nothing rather than get \$1 and the proposer leaving with \$9.

At the end of the day, remember that compromising is an easy, safe choice. But safe and easy isn't what makes your dreams come true. Instead, be empathetic, connect with your opponent, ask questions, make your opponent see your side, and never split the difference.

# Final Summary

Through the key tools that Chris Voss has spelled out, you can become a negotiating master in all areas of life. Whether you're negotiating with your boss, your partner at home, or with the local car salesman, you can employ these techniques to ensure that you never have to compromise. Remember to stay calm, be empathetic, and get to know your counterparty's views. If you can establish trust and rapport, then you can always get what you want and never split the difference. To quote Chris Voss "one can only be an exceptional negotiator, and a great person, by both listening and speaking clearly and empathetically; by treating counterparts - and oneself - with dignity and respect; and most of all by being honest about what one wants and what one can - and cannot - do. Every negotiation, every conversation, every moment of life, is a series of small conflicts that, managed well, can rise to creative beauty. Embrace them."



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