

Never meet in the middle – the techniques the FBI uses to negotiate

Upcoming episode

A former FBI hostage negotiator on why you should never meet in the middle. A walk through the ideas in Chris Voss's *Never Split the Difference* – tactical empathy, mirroring, calibrated questions – and what holds outside a hostage situation.

THE BOOK THIS EPISODE IS ABOUT

Never Split the Difference – Chris Voss og Tahl Raz

2016

MAIN TOPICS

- Why compromise is often the worst outcome
- Tactical empathy – understanding the other side without agreeing
- Mirroring and labelling
- Calibrated questions beginning with how and what
- Why a no is a better start than a yes
- The difference between "you're right" and "that's right"
- The Ackerman model for negotiating on price
- The criticism of the book

QUESTIONS THIS EPISODE ANSWERS

- Why should you not meet in the middle in a negotiation?
- What is tactical empathy?
- What are mirroring and labelling in negotiation?
- What is a calibrated question?
- Why is no a good start?
- How do you negotiate salary or price the way Voss does?
- Does hostage negotiation work in ordinary negotiations?

KEY POINTS

- Meeting in the middle often produces an outcome nobody actually wanted.
- The aim is to understand what the other side really needs – not to agree.
- "How am I supposed to do that?" moves the problem to the other side of the table.
- A no gives people a sense of control. The conversation starts from there.
- "That's right" means they feel understood. "You're right" means they want you to stop.
- The techniques are easy to describe and hard to execute under pressure.

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

- Chris Voss and Tahl Raz – Never Split the Difference (2016)

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