

Transcript | Effective Negotiation Skills for Public Service

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00:00:13.350 --> 00:00:30.270

Derek Alton: Well, Hello, everyone, and welcome to this panel event on conducting effective and successful negotiations in the public service. My name is Derek Alton, and I'm the community engagement lead here at Apolitical. It'd be great to hear from all of you. So do post in the chat where you're joining us from and what organization you work for. So

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00:00:30.450 --> 00:00:44.350

Derek Alton: over the next hour, we're going to be learning about negotiation, which is an important element of work in the public sector and full of transferable skills that you can reply in your role even when you're not actively negotiating. And of course, also in your own personal life

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00:00:44.560 --> 00:00:47.759

Derek Alton: for those of you who may be joining us for the 1st time. Welcome!

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00:00:47.870 --> 00:00:56.699

Derek Alton: Apolitical is the world's largest community for government used by over a quarter of a million public servants and policymakers from more than 170 countries around the world.

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00:00:57.220 --> 00:01:04.439

Derek Alton: Our mission is to make government smarter, and we do this by putting the best knowledge and skills at the fingertips of public servants around the world.

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00:01:05.690 --> 00:01:16.869

Derek Alton: So where are you all joining us from? Oh, well, we have some people from Geneva, Switzerland. Excellent Scotland, of course. Bermuda. Oh, wow! We got a very diverse group of people here. This is gonna be a lot of fun, Stefan.

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00:01:17.010 --> 00:01:45.990

Derek Alton: Canada, which, of course, is where I'm from. Excellent Saskatchewan, perfect, excellent welcome, and a special welcome to those of you who sorry. There we go. Haha! Welcome to, especially already members of apolitical systems, thinking community. If you're not part of the group we're thrilled to extend an invitation to join today's speaker and your peers

from across the global public service. So it's 1 of the greatest abilities that a negotiator can have in government is being able to see the big picture

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00:01:45.990 --> 00:02:13.100

Derek Alton: and understand how their actions can impact the wider system around them systems. Thinking is crucial to building such an understanding. So we'd love to have you join us in this space to discuss the intersection of systems, thinking, and negotiation. Perhaps you have some practical tips to share with your local public sector peers, you should see a little tab pop up. Excellent! There it is at the bottom of your screen. Now, that will take you to the Forum, or you can navigate to the resource section, where you'll find the link, too.

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00:02:14.630 --> 00:02:34.270

Derek Alton: All right. So I'm going to get a few technical notes out of the way before we get into today's conversation, this event is recorded for on demand. Viewing on Apolitical's website, please don't record it yourself. Contact details for privacy concerns are in the apolitical homepage footer. Closed captions are available and can be toggled off in your screen settings.

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00:02:36.150 --> 00:02:46.349

Derek Alton: All right. So before we introduce our speaker, we're going to run through quick polls to get a sense of where you're coming from in today's discussion. So now let's have a look at the 1st Poll.

11

00:02:47.160 --> 00:02:50.259

Derek Alton: how do you currently feel about your negotiation skills?

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00:02:50.870 --> 00:02:58.999

Derek Alton: Very confident, fairly confident, not so confident. Or you avoid negotiations whenever possible.

13

00:02:59.210 --> 00:03:02.260

Derek Alton: So if you could just take a second to fill up the poll, please.

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00:03:03.500 --> 00:03:09.580

Derek Alton: So once again, how do you feel about your current? How do you currently feel about your negotiation skills? Very confident.

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00:03:10.130 --> 00:03:16.890

Derek Alton: fairly confident, not so confident, or avoid negotiations at all costs.

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00:03:17.450 --> 00:03:26.290

Derek Alton: This is interesting, so we have close to 50 50 split. But obviously most people are feeling not so confident. So this is good. You're you're in the right place. This is exactly where you want to be.

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00:03:28.200 --> 00:03:30.489

Derek Alton: All right. Second one is.

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00:03:30.630 --> 00:03:41.410

Derek Alton: what's your main reason for wanting to improve your negotiation skills, to advance my career opportunities to secure better outcomes for my organization.

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00:03:42.060 --> 00:03:45.720

Derek Alton: to manage stakeholder relationships more effectively in my work.

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00:03:46.040 --> 00:03:56.600

Derek Alton: gain confidence in difficult conversations or something else, and you can tell us in the chat, and I know some people mentioned they don't see the poll. If you don't see the poll, just answer just directly into the chat.

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00:03:56.990 --> 00:04:12.300

Derek Alton: So what's your main reason for wanting to improve your negotiation skills to advance my career, opportunities to secure better outcomes for my organization, manage stakeholder relationships more effectively in my work, or gain confidence in difficult conversations.

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00:04:13.370 --> 00:04:26.589

Derek Alton: Here we have. It seems that the most pop there's almost a even split between managing stakeholder relationships more effectively in my work, which is something I can definitely relate to or gain confidence in difficult conversations.

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00:04:27.710 --> 00:04:32.589

Derek Alton: Excellent! Thank you so much, everyone. And then, finally, our 3rd and final question.

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00:04:33.790 --> 00:04:42.990

Derek Alton: what do you think is the biggest challenge in public sector negotiations, balancing competing interests, navigating bureaucratic constraints.

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00:04:43.530 --> 00:04:48.020

Derek Alton: building trust with stakeholders, securing resources or funding

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00:04:48.560 --> 00:04:54.429

Derek Alton: managing political sensitivities, or something else. And if it's not something that falls in this category. Please tell us in the chat.

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00:04:54.890 --> 00:05:01.379

Derek Alton: So once again, what do you think is the biggest challenge in public sector negotiations, balancing competing interests.

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00:05:01.820 --> 00:05:08.110

Derek Alton: navigating bureaucratic constraints, building trust with stakeholders, securing resources or funding.

29

00:05:08.560 --> 00:05:11.769

Derek Alton: managing political sensitivities or something else.

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00:05:14.010 --> 00:05:15.880

Derek Alton: So just take a second to fill it out.

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00:05:17.610 --> 00:05:31.400

Derek Alton: Okay, so here, balancing competing interests seems to be the most common but also navigating bureaucratic constraints is another really common one that comes up. So, Stefan, I'm looking forward to that. We'll be a chance to dig into a couple of these with you here today.

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00:05:34.240 --> 00:05:52.639

Derek Alton: So 1st off, thanks for taking time in those polls. Now it is my chance to introduce our speaker, for today we're very fortunate to have Stefan Sipasi join us here. Stefan is the founder of negotiation and public service, and the director of the Dutch firm. And I'm going to try to get this right. Westlink Van Zygist

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00:05:52.770 --> 00:05:56.859

Derek Alton: experts in mutual gaining gains and negotiation was that good? I got that.

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00:05:56.860 --> 00:05:58.049

Stefan Szepesi: Pretty good. Yeah.

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00:05:58.050 --> 00:06:24.529

Derek Alton: Thank you. His practitioner experience at the table includes international trade talks for the EU and negotiations on Middle East peace process for the EU and the UN. In the Netherlands and beyond. He's involved in advising various branches of government on designing multi-party negotiation processes, and has trained and advised hundreds of diplomats, civil servants, social entrepreneurs, and nonprofit leaders for a variety of backgrounds on negotiation.

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00:06:24.810 --> 00:06:31.440

Derek Alton: You can read Stefan's full bio by visiting the resource tab at the bottom of your zoom screen and heading to the speaker. Section

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00:06:32.530 --> 00:06:47.969

Derek Alton: 7. It is a real pleasure to have you here with us today, and I'm really looking forward to your masterclass before I hand it over to you. I thought I might. It might be a bit fun to start off with a quick icebreaker, and, as always, I encourage our attendees to share their thoughts on this question, too. So if you're ready.

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00:06:48.280 --> 00:06:55.250

Derek Alton: our icebreaker for today is what type of negotiation. Do you find most difficult? And do you have any example?

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00:06:55.710 --> 00:07:09.739

Derek Alton: So, Stefan, I'll give you a moment to think about this, and whilst you're doing so, I'd like to draw everyone's attention to the link that my colleague has just posted in the chat which

will take you to a thread in our systems community, our systems, thinking community, where you can share your own response to this question.

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00:07:11.540 --> 00:07:15.560

Derek Alton: All right, Steph, I'm going to turn it back to you now. So what? How would you answer that question?

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00:07:16.963 --> 00:07:31.899

Stefan Szepesi: Yeah, thanks, 1st of all, Derek, for having me in in your forum. And with this amazing special community of public servants worldwide. I think it's 1 which was not mentioned in your 3rd poll

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00:07:32.160 --> 00:07:34.390

Stefan Szepesi: on challenges in negotiation.

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00:07:34.510 --> 00:07:46.759

Stefan Szepesi: but thinking about it, especially with what's happening in the Netherlands and around the world. Today, I think for me the most challenging one is one called speaking truth to power.

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00:07:46.950 --> 00:07:47.530

Derek Alton: Hmm.

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00:07:47.530 --> 00:07:52.890

Stefan Szepesi: That's a situation that civil servants sometimes face.

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00:07:53.200 --> 00:08:11.550

Stefan Szepesi: you know, with colleagues, but in particular higher up in the hierarchy, you know, with directors, or even with ministers, in which they need to tell them that a certain course of action is unwise or unwarranted, or sometimes even unlawful. How do you have such a conversation.

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00:08:11.730 --> 00:08:28.719

Stefan Szepesi: and it's extremely important, because most civil servants, at least in the Netherlands. In many countries they pledge an oath to the Constitution. So what do you do in a situation where there's a imbalance of power? But you still want to speak up.

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00:08:28.950 --> 00:08:32.929

Stefan Szepesi: and in my experience that is often not seen as a negotiation.

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00:08:33.110 --> 00:08:52.460

Stefan Szepesi: But people can be far more effective in dealing with these situations if they put on their negotiation perspective or their negotiation lens, and then have that truth to power conversation. So that for me, but it's very challenging. Obviously, because a lot of it is at stake in these type of difficult conversations.

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00:08:52.900 --> 00:09:21.129

Derek Alton: Well, I think it's a good reminder that negotiation is something that is such a universal skill that it can be applied in so many different situations. So I'm going to hand over to you in a second. But just before I do, I just want to remind people that have your questions ready. There's a Q&A function at the bottom. So please put your questions into the Q. And A, and we've set aside a bunch of time at the end for us to dig into your questions and pass them on to Stefan and get your thoughts on this. So with that, I would now hand it over to you, Stefan. Take us away.

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00:09:21.850 --> 00:09:28.999

Stefan Szepesi: Thank you, Derek, and to everybody. Glad you're here. I want to make this as interactive as possible.

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00:09:29.500 --> 00:09:36.949

Stefan Szepesi: What I'm going to do is, take a case that is fictional, but inspired on a number of cases that I've dealt with

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00:09:37.240 --> 00:09:40.810

Stefan Szepesi: but simplified just for 30 min.

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00:09:41.505 --> 00:09:46.609

Stefan Szepesi: Take you through the process of a tough public sector like negotiation

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00:09:46.750 --> 00:10:04.380

Stefan Szepesi: and get your input and actually put you in the shoes of the person who has to facilitate this, who has to be either the mediator or the chair, or the facilitator, whatever you call it, for such a process. So my plan is to 1st

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00:10:04.620 --> 00:10:06.239

Stefan Szepesi: present to you the case

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00:10:06.570 --> 00:10:26.000

Stefan Szepesi: simplified in substance. So everybody sort of understands hopefully what the case is about which parties are involved and what has happened, and then, through a number of polls that we've prepared, I just want to get the feel of what you would do as a community in such situations. So what is the negotiation, wisdom?

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00:10:26.040 --> 00:10:38.809

Stefan Szepesi: And then, I think, after about 30 min, we can take any questions on on anything in negotiation really, or on the case in particular, as as you see fit, Derek, because you, you will probably facilitate that part.

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00:10:39.371 --> 00:10:43.070

Stefan Szepesi: So is it? Okay? If I share my screen.

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00:10:43.790 --> 00:10:44.889

Derek Alton: Yes, please.

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00:10:44.890 --> 00:10:48.150

Stefan Szepesi: Yeah, let me see, how do we do this?

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00:10:48.850 --> 00:10:52.000

Stefan Szepesi: I think Derek can tell me if this works.

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00:10:53.660 --> 00:10:55.860

Derek Alton: Yep, there we go! I can see it. Excellent!

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00:10:56.560 --> 00:11:00.160

Stefan Szepesi: Right, and you see it in the right way, or you see the presenter screen.

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00:11:00.160 --> 00:11:01.589

Derek Alton: I see it in the right way.

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00:11:01.590 --> 00:11:05.708

Stefan Szepesi: Oh, wonderful. Okay, then we can go all right. So

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00:11:07.500 --> 00:11:12.999

Stefan Szepesi: this is this is the case. I I've called it leaving while staying.

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00:11:13.420 --> 00:11:20.419

Stefan Szepesi: There's a very large government-owned corporation call the National Post Service.

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00:11:20.680 --> 00:11:24.720

Stefan Szepesi: and it has decided that it needs to merge its facilities

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00:11:24.910 --> 00:11:27.550

Stefan Szepesi: and leave a certain city called Patan.

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00:11:28.190 --> 00:11:43.220

Stefan Szepesi: and this is because external market conditions and logistics are difficult for this company. It needs to survive. It needs to be financially healthy. So it needs to make this tough decision. The point is that it has been in this area for 99 years.

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00:11:43.410 --> 00:11:47.490

Stefan Szepesi: and it employs 1,500 people. So that's not little

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00:11:48.248 --> 00:11:55.269

Stefan Szepesi: in addition, its offices are placed in what is national heritage. So what is protected

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00:11:56.025 --> 00:12:01.390

Stefan Szepesi: protected space in terms of the way it looks and is structured, and so on.

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00:12:01.490 --> 00:12:07.199

Stefan Szepesi: But it's very expensive to run into to maintain which is part of the reason why they need to leave

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00:12:07.510 --> 00:12:16.899

Stefan Szepesi: now, 10 years earlier, to this negotiation the company had made a similar decision, and then withdrew that decision, and eventually decided it would stay

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00:12:17.040 --> 00:12:18.329

Stefan Szepesi: in pattern.

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00:12:18.560 --> 00:12:22.630

Stefan Szepesi: Now you should know that this is an economically weak part of the country.

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00:12:22.790 --> 00:12:42.069

Stefan Szepesi: and it is a city that is struggling to attract investments. I have 4 parties in this negotiation just to simplify it. In reality there were slightly more. It's the corporation. Obviously, it's the Governor's office. It's the Mayor's office, and it's the Ministry, the National Ministry of Employment.

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00:12:42.310 --> 00:12:51.299

Stefan Szepesi: I'm now going to tell you a few more details, and then we're going to start. I'm going to start with asking you questions and discussing with you as an audience what should happen.

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00:12:52.000 --> 00:13:00.079

Stefan Szepesi: So the Ministry of Employment has been asked by the company to think of Government services that could replace

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00:13:00.210 --> 00:13:09.089

Stefan Szepesi: its employment in pattern, and they have a couple of ideas, but those are initial ideas, no promises there.

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00:13:09.270 --> 00:13:17.000

Stefan Szepesi: However, the Governor and the Mayor have made several public statements, that the idea of this company leaving is badly thought through.

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00:13:17.290 --> 00:13:23.039

Stefan Szepesi: and these statements have been made in the press along the lines of this is not and never going to happen.

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00:13:23.190 --> 00:13:32.569

Stefan Szepesi: Now, you may think a company can do what it wants, but if a company is 51% government owned. It's actually slightly difficult to do exactly what you want.

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00:13:32.960 --> 00:13:40.119

Stefan Szepesi: Public pressure is mounting. No final decision has been made, and relationship between the 4 parties have soured.

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00:13:40.420 --> 00:13:44.330

Stefan Szepesi: and I've asked for help in negotiating a solution.

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00:13:44.840 --> 00:13:49.740

Stefan Szepesi: Now, this is my proposal to all of you who participate in this call.

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00:13:49.920 --> 00:13:56.809

Stefan Szepesi: You are now hired in this fictitious situation to facilitate this negotiation between the top advisors

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00:13:57.000 --> 00:13:59.079

Stefan Szepesi: to the decision makers.

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00:13:59.670 --> 00:14:06.229

Stefan Szepesi: So you can facilitate between these 4 parties. And I have a 1st question on that.

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00:14:06.390 --> 00:14:11.710

Stefan Szepesi: and that is the following, if there wouldn't be no external facilitator available.

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00:14:11.910 --> 00:14:14.530

Stefan Szepesi: and you just have to sort this out on your own.

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00:14:14.900 --> 00:14:17.360

Stefan Szepesi: Who do you think would be most suitable

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00:14:17.740 --> 00:14:24.640

Stefan Szepesi: to facilitate this negotiation? And if we could run the 1st poll, we can see

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00:14:25.130 --> 00:14:27.730

Stefan Szepesi: what you what you think is a group.

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00:14:28.280 --> 00:14:34.830

Stefan Szepesi: If there's no external facilitator available who should chair this negotiation.

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00:14:51.110 --> 00:14:54.479

Stefan Szepesi: I will wait for some 1st results.

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00:15:01.790 --> 00:15:05.380

Stefan Szepesi: Let me see if they're coming all right. You are

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00:15:05.490 --> 00:15:08.240

Stefan Szepesi: divided as a group on this.

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00:15:08.400 --> 00:15:16.560

Stefan Szepesi: But most of you think it's the employment ministry, and we're too many in this call to discuss why, but that would be

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00:15:16.790 --> 00:15:25.969

Stefan Szepesi: carefully my answer, as well, not knowing many more details. And the the reason is that in a situation like this

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00:15:26.563 --> 00:15:34.410

Stefan Szepesi: we often tend to look who's hosting in terms of power? Who's hosting in terms of who took the initiative? Whose idea is it, anyway?

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00:15:35.092 --> 00:15:39.939

Stefan Szepesi: But a second thought that can be extremely helpful in this sharing question

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00:15:40.120 --> 00:15:45.709

Stefan Szepesi: is to think about who balances most of the interest in the room.

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00:15:46.180 --> 00:15:52.600

Stefan Szepesi: So who, who is the most near to neutral party, although none of these 4 is really neutral.

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00:15:52.910 --> 00:15:57.310

Stefan Szepesi: and therefore who would be able to gain most trust

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00:15:57.460 --> 00:16:12.699

Stefan Szepesi: from the other parties, and I think in this case it's the employment ministry, because they're a bit further away from this battle between the company and the the local and regional politicians. So let me let me move on to

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00:16:13.518 --> 00:16:20.289

Stefan Szepesi: the next question. I'm going to share a slide next slide with a bit bit of background

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00:16:20.730 --> 00:16:25.029

Stefan Szepesi: that I'm not going to read out, but you can read it for yourself.

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00:16:25.250 --> 00:16:30.690

Stefan Szepesi: It's about various positions that the parties take various interests that are at stake

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00:16:30.780 --> 00:16:57.399

Stefan Szepesi: and something about the past, and I actually want to ask you immediately a second poll question. You are going. You are now externally invited to chair this negotiation, and

of course, as a smart external party, you're going to call each of these parties individually and talk to them right? You're going to before you get into the room with all of them, you're going to intake conversations.

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00:16:58.130 --> 00:17:06.960

Stefan Szepesi: And can I have the next poll that asks, what should you avoid emphasizing in those bilateral conversations.

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00:17:07.369 --> 00:17:09.760

Stefan Szepesi: So what should you avoid?

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00:17:10.079 --> 00:17:13.549

Stefan Szepesi: What should you steer clear of? Is it your mandate?

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00:17:13.910 --> 00:17:15.520

Stefan Szepesi: Is it interest?

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00:17:16.040 --> 00:17:20.810

Stefan Szepesi: Is it positions, or is it. What has happened in the past?

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00:17:22.069 --> 00:17:27.319

Stefan Szepesi: Very curious. What you think is the topic to try and avoid.

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00:17:31.650 --> 00:17:35.000

Stefan Szepesi: Thank you all for voting and participating. Let's see

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00:17:35.320 --> 00:17:39.090

Stefan Szepesi: what the balance of the group thinks worldwide.

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00:17:39.620 --> 00:17:42.250

Stefan Szepesi: Okay, very interesting.

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00:17:42.380 --> 00:18:09.720

Stefan Szepesi: clearly, very few of you think you should avoid your mandate as a facilitator, and I completely agree. This is quite important to actually discuss before, and have very clear what you can and cannot do as a facilitator what you're allowed to discuss, how you will discuss it, how much time you will have, and so on. So I agree. That's something you should actually discuss with all the parties. Interestingly, most of you vote for the past.

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00:18:10.140 --> 00:18:17.590

Stefan Szepesi: and I understand why we want to often want to prevent racking up things

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00:18:17.650 --> 00:18:46.770

Stefan Szepesi: that that are negative, that stir up old relationship dynamics or emotions or things that people fight over from from what has happened in the past. It's actually quite healthy to listen to people talk about the past. In fact, it's often quite necessary, because they want to get it over your chest. And as a facilitator you should know what the potential role of the past may be in the present. So while it's not necessarily something

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00:18:47.170 --> 00:18:58.920

Stefan Szepesi: that is inviting to talk about, because everybody wants to go to the solution to the future, to the beautiful bright horizon. It's actually quite useful in these conversations to talk about the past.

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00:18:59.840 --> 00:19:02.639

Stefan Szepesi: I think you should really focus on interest

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00:19:02.760 --> 00:19:07.880

Stefan Szepesi: and distinguish that from position. So interests are what parties really need.

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00:19:08.240 --> 00:19:11.120

Stefan Szepesi: Positions are what parties really want.

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00:19:11.830 --> 00:19:38.769

Stefan Szepesi: So I tend to agree with the 29% of you that voted to avoid talking about positions. I think positions can be helpful if they're stated. But the immediate, let's say, jujutsu, that one can do on it is ask, why? Why do you say they have to stay, or why do you say the company has to leave what is the underlying needs. And then we get into a real, interesting discussion whether those needs can be matched later on in the negotiation.

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00:19:39.170 --> 00:19:51.060

Stefan Szepesi: So for me, the answer would be 3. Try to avoid talking about positions, or at least try to put attention towards the other 3 topics that were on this list.

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00:19:52.495 --> 00:19:57.534

Stefan Szepesi: Okay, let me. See, now we've done our intakes and

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00:19:58.980 --> 00:20:08.110

Stefan Szepesi: and we get seated. We have done our design, which I'll skip for now, because that's quite a lot of work to design the meeting. But we're in the meeting with these 4 parties.

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00:20:09.630 --> 00:20:11.210

Stefan Szepesi: Can I have the next

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00:20:11.430 --> 00:20:16.839

Stefan Szepesi: Paul? Because that's about this. Once we are seated in the room.

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00:20:17.400 --> 00:20:21.719

Stefan Szepesi: Put yourself in the shoes of the facilitator.

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00:20:21.960 --> 00:20:28.809

Stefan Szepesi: and what's the most important principle for a good start. So we're really here in minute number one

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00:20:29.270 --> 00:20:32.790

Stefan Szepesi: of this meeting between the 4 parties.

138

00:20:33.010 --> 00:20:49.489

Stefan Szepesi: Is it to get the facts agreed? So facts are, for example, how many people work here? How many would leave? What time, what is the time? Frame? What is the state of these buildings? And so on, and so forth? What was promises in the past is also a fact.

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00:20:50.022 --> 00:21:01.650

Stefan Szepesi: So should we discuss that, should we focus on options for mutual gain on solutions, you know, in what ways can we make everybody happy? In what ways can we make everybody leave this room satisfied?

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00:21:02.090 --> 00:21:10.189

Stefan Szepesi: Or should we focus on people before problems? So putting people 1st and not talk about

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00:21:10.660 --> 00:21:13.200

Stefan Szepesi: problems in minute number one.

142

00:21:14.140 --> 00:21:19.179

Stefan Szepesi: Let me see. Very interesting. If the group is divided or there is consensus.

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00:21:19.760 --> 00:21:22.160

Stefan Szepesi: Oh, it almost cuts in 3,

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00:21:22.380 --> 00:21:30.159

Stefan Szepesi: 47% of you think we should start with getting the facts agreed. 21% think we should focus on options for mutual gain.

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00:21:30.330 --> 00:21:34.689

Stefan Szepesi: And a 3rd of you think we should put people before problems?

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00:21:36.670 --> 00:21:42.850

Stefan Szepesi: I think your chances of a constructive dialogue are

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00:21:43.080 --> 00:21:55.330

Stefan Szepesi: best if you put the 3rd principle first, st the other 2 are extremely important, and they should be part of your design of the negotiation. But if there's tension in the group.

148

00:21:55.450 --> 00:22:02.009

Stefan Szepesi: you really want to see, in what way can we start getting people to connect to one another as human beings.

149

00:22:02.270 --> 00:22:24.550

Stefan Szepesi: so that could be done in different ways. It could be through a round of introductions, talking for 5 min about the reason Christmas holidays, or other things that as a facilitator you can creatively think up doesn't have to take very long. But if you've noticed in your intake calls that the personal relationship have been strained for whatever reason.

150

00:22:24.750 --> 00:22:32.999

Stefan Szepesi: that is something we're not going to repair through a huge psychological session. But we are going to have a decent human to human start.

151

00:22:33.340 --> 00:22:35.190

Stefan Szepesi: which means we avoid

152

00:22:35.420 --> 00:22:42.069

Stefan Szepesi: talking about facts in the 1st minute, and we avoid talking about solutions, although they will be tabled. Obviously.

153

00:22:42.300 --> 00:23:02.130

Stefan Szepesi: So that would be my suggestion. Now, you may think this is a session about negotiation. It's not a session about how to be a good facilitator. But let me tell you, if you're in a tough negotiation yourself, and you can put yourself in the shoe the shoes of a fictional facilitator. That's a very good perspective to have.

154

00:23:02.270 --> 00:23:06.530

Stefan Szepesi: because that fictional facilitator has one interest only.

155

00:23:06.880 --> 00:23:10.969

Stefan Szepesi: and that is to make the dialogue the negotiation as constructive as possible.

156

00:23:11.290 --> 00:23:25.240

Stefan Szepesi: And if you, if you know the answer to that question, how do I make the dialogue constructive. Even if you're not the facilitator, but just one of the parties, it will really help you make the right interventions, and will prevent you from stepping into this trap

157

00:23:25.640 --> 00:23:35.989

Stefan Szepesi: of the of the of the classic dynamic, of a negotiation which is very much you state what you want, though, in the loudest possible way right? That's often not helpful to get what you want.

158

00:23:36.310 --> 00:23:42.899

Stefan Szepesi: So the facilitator's perspective can be a helpful one, even if you're not not facilitating.

159

00:23:44.020 --> 00:23:45.520

Stefan Szepesi: All right.

160

00:23:47.100 --> 00:23:52.680

Stefan Szepesi: Let me see, I'd like to get to

161

00:23:55.030 --> 00:24:01.348

Stefan Szepesi: one more poll, and then I'll show you a slide, but not yet. One more poll

162

00:24:01.900 --> 00:24:05.120

Stefan Szepesi: of what is next after having addressed

163

00:24:05.440 --> 00:24:09.079

Stefan Szepesi: the relationship after having addressed a couple of facts.

164

00:24:09.200 --> 00:24:19.930

Stefan Szepesi: So facts are very important. Facts include, what's the mandate of the parties in the room, you know. Can they actually negotiate? What is the negotiation about what should be our goal for this

165

00:24:20.370 --> 00:24:27.509

Stefan Szepesi: negotiation? What we want to have achieved after 2 h, for example, but also things like, what's the case really like?

166

00:24:27.610 --> 00:24:42.389

Stefan Szepesi: If the company says there's a thousand jobs on the line. But the Governor says there's 5,000 jobs on the line. It's good to get all these facts discussed. At least we know what we agree on, and we do not yet agree on before we go into the substance

167

00:24:42.470 --> 00:24:59.959

Stefan Szepesi: of what the negotiation is about, and by substance, I mean, you know, there's a certain argument about whether this company should leave or stay, and perhaps how they should leave or stay. But we postpone that. We postpone that quite deliberately, because we don't have the right build up in the negotiation.

168

00:25:00.180 --> 00:25:13.479

Stefan Szepesi: So we've addressed relationship. You know, we've tried to have, perhaps not a clean start. That would be difficult, but a better start than the than the previous fallout that they had. We go through the facts. And then what's next?

169

00:25:13.670 --> 00:25:15.980

Stefan Szepesi: Do we focus on interest?

170

00:25:16.760 --> 00:25:19.620

Stefan Szepesi: So these are the underlying needs of the parties?

171

00:25:20.050 --> 00:25:24.420

Stefan Szepesi: Do we focus again on solutions, on the options for mutual gain?

172

00:25:24.660 --> 00:25:30.470

Stefan Szepesi: That may that that one may think of? Or do we focus on how to divide

173

00:25:30.620 --> 00:25:41.220

Stefan Szepesi: risk money or time between the parties. In other words, you get this, then I get this, and if you get more, I get less. That's the 3rd one.

174

00:25:41.450 --> 00:25:45.009

Stefan Szepesi: Very curious after relationships and facts.

175

00:25:45.180 --> 00:25:47.869

Stefan Szepesi: What should come next?

176

00:25:56.620 --> 00:25:57.830

Stefan Szepesi: Let's see.

177

00:25:59.350 --> 00:26:00.610

Stefan Szepesi: All right.

178

00:26:01.060 --> 00:26:11.420

Stefan Szepesi: I'm very glad quite few of you have chosen the 3rd in negotiation. The distribution of value

179

00:26:12.430 --> 00:26:15.219

Stefan Szepesi: is something that has a legitimate place.

180

00:26:15.460 --> 00:26:17.669

Stefan Szepesi: but it's a place towards the end.

181

00:26:18.150 --> 00:26:39.329

Stefan Szepesi: If we front, load it. If we do this too early, we will actually shrink the pie. We will make the options for creativity, for good solutions smaller. In fact, we'll make the odds of getting to agreement smaller than they would otherwise be. So I would certainly, at this stage not yet go into division of risk and time and money.

182

00:26:39.810 --> 00:26:42.790

Stefan Szepesi: It has its place, but it's still too early

183

00:26:43.330 --> 00:27:02.729

Stefan Szepesi: the second one options for mutual gain. This is one that is extremely attractive after good introduction and some facts to talk about ideas. For example, the Ministry of Employment may say, Look, we have a couple of government agencies that are expanding, and we need a place for them. We could put them here.

184

00:27:03.000 --> 00:27:11.350

Stefan Szepesi: In fact, it's agency A, B and C total of 500 jobs that may well be possible.

185

00:27:11.640 --> 00:27:18.090

Stefan Szepesi: And with that way the company could leave. And you know the local government and governor may still be happy.

186

00:27:18.500 --> 00:27:25.529

Stefan Szepesi: That's extremely attractive to put on the table. In fact, that may be sort of a gift or a present that the Ministry has in its back pocket.

187

00:27:25.760 --> 00:27:30.080

Stefan Szepesi: I would certainly advise you to avoid going there too early.

188

00:27:31.150 --> 00:27:34.790

Stefan Szepesi: because it may make a lot of sense from a rational point of view.

189

00:27:35.280 --> 00:27:38.349

Stefan Szepesi: But before we have taken one more step.

190

00:27:38.890 --> 00:27:43.029

Stefan Szepesi: it's actually risky to put solutions on the table too early in the negotiation.

191

00:27:43.650 --> 00:27:53.500

Stefan Szepesi: So in this case I would agree with those who voted for focus on interest, and very often

192

00:27:53.650 --> 00:28:05.350

Stefan Szepesi: people assume they know interest, so it's implicit. They know the needs of the other parties very well. The other parties are just after money. They're just after political credit. They're just after this or that

193

00:28:06.154 --> 00:28:07.889

Stefan Szepesi: and we don't ask.

194

00:28:08.390 --> 00:28:18.490

Stefan Szepesi: And even when we ask, we don't repeat, we don't summarize people's interest back to them extremely important. So if you're the facilitator, my advice would be

195

00:28:18.610 --> 00:28:22.430

Stefan Szepesi: make sure, even if you know it as a facilitator, make sure

196

00:28:22.610 --> 00:28:25.339

Stefan Szepesi: the parties talk to one another about their interest.

197

00:28:25.470 --> 00:28:36.439

Stefan Szepesi: Write them down, repeat them, summarize them, and ask them if all interests have been shared, because only once you've done that, and you've acknowledged really what's at stake.

198

00:28:37.010 --> 00:28:44.060

Stefan Szepesi: then it's safer to go towards solution and let me show you one picture I have

199

00:28:47.070 --> 00:28:48.960

Stefan Szepesi: in public service.

200

00:28:49.370 --> 00:28:52.500

Stefan Szepesi: It's often very popular and legitimate

201

00:28:52.630 --> 00:29:13.060

Stefan Szepesi: to talk about the top scale of interest. That is the interest to society. So the Ministry of Employment will talk about their mandate to increase employment and spread it around the country right. The company will talk about its mandate to do its business and have a financially healthy situation, and the governor has their own interest in the mayor as well for its citizens. That's the interest of society

202

00:29:13.440 --> 00:29:16.360

Stefan Szepesi: as negotiators. What we should take into account

203

00:29:16.570 --> 00:29:21.569

Stefan Szepesi: is that the 2 lower levels often weigh far heavier. We may not like it.

204

00:29:21.760 --> 00:29:30.070

Stefan Szepesi: but that's the situation. So the particular organizational interests weigh heavily, but not often people share those interests what they are.

205

00:29:30.440 --> 00:29:35.670

Stefan Szepesi: and the 3rd one, the individual interest, weigh extremely heavily and

206

00:29:36.150 --> 00:29:38.810

Stefan Szepesi: very rarely they are shared outright.

207

00:29:39.520 --> 00:29:43.710

Stefan Szepesi: We do really well as negotiators. If we can indirectly

208

00:29:45.150 --> 00:29:53.039

Stefan Szepesi: have a peek at those individual interests, because that allows us to move towards a solution that is workable for our for our counterparts.

209

00:29:53.330 --> 00:30:01.259

Stefan Szepesi: So, for example, an individual interest may be that a senior advisor at the table wants to make a really good impression towards the mayor.

210

00:30:02.150 --> 00:30:09.360

Stefan Szepesi: right, or the individual interest of the mayor may be that this person wants to be reelected in 6 months time, and therefore needs

211

00:30:09.690 --> 00:30:12.199

Stefan Szepesi: the result to be of a certain color and type.

212

00:30:12.570 --> 00:30:24.669

Stefan Szepesi: Right? So sometimes we can with our imagination, we can get very far if we can build a lot of trust in the negotiation parties tend to share all their interests. Right? But it's not all. That's not always the case.

213

00:30:25.845 --> 00:30:37.230

Stefan Szepesi: I think I have one more question to go on and that's that's the following.

214

00:30:37.400 --> 00:30:52.960

Stefan Szepesi: I'm gonna give you a simplified solution to this negotiation, which, of course, is not reached within 30 min. It takes a couple of meetings. It takes a couple of hours to work through these steps that that I've gone through. But let's say.

215

00:30:53.080 --> 00:30:59.310

Stefan Szepesi: the solution is that the company stays and leaves at the same time.

216

00:30:59.840 --> 00:31:04.639

Stefan Szepesi: So they leave for the majority of their business, but they stay with some smaller departments.

217

00:31:05.501 --> 00:31:13.090

Stefan Szepesi: And the Ministry of Employment can create a lot of value with new government agencies coming into this

218

00:31:13.190 --> 00:31:20.459

Stefan Szepesi: city, and all in all you know, employment is not lost or is not lost, that much.

219

00:31:20.750 --> 00:31:25.790

Stefan Szepesi: The heritage of the buildings can be maintained because there's a new user, and so on.

220

00:31:26.050 --> 00:31:34.729

Stefan Szepesi: And everybody on the rational side should be happy. Right? So for an engineer this is, this is like the perfect solution, or at least it's an acceptable solution.

221

00:31:35.650 --> 00:31:38.179

Stefan Szepesi: And yet it may not work.

222

00:31:38.780 --> 00:31:41.110

Stefan Szepesi: and I'm going to ask you

223

00:31:41.330 --> 00:31:55.439

Stefan Szepesi: to take the following quiz, because when it doesn't work, there's often something going on with the constituencies that are not in the room that are not in the room in the negotiation room.

224

00:31:55.560 --> 00:31:57.539

Stefan Szepesi: I'm going to share the

225

00:31:58.000 --> 00:32:03.030

Stefan Szepesi: following picture with you, and I'm going to ask our last poll to be conducted.

226

00:32:03.330 --> 00:32:08.980

Stefan Szepesi: because this is an acronym that I find extremely useful in the back of my head

227

00:32:09.170 --> 00:32:14.830

Stefan Szepesi: to use when I analyze negotiation, or when I'm facilitating the negotiation of other parties.

228

00:32:15.270 --> 00:32:19.079

Stefan Szepesi: and it's the acronym. WITL.

229

00:32:19.290 --> 00:32:22.019

Stefan Szepesi: It doesn't pronounce so beautifully. But

230

00:32:22.130 --> 00:32:24.800

Stefan Szepesi: I could pronounce it, I suppose, as whittle.

231

00:32:24.980 --> 00:32:29.250

Stefan Szepesi: But what does Whittle stand for? That's my question to you.

232

00:32:29.630 --> 00:32:32.699

Stefan Szepesi: Does it stand for? Where is the language?

233

00:32:33.160 --> 00:32:36.270

Stefan Szepesi: Does it stand for? Where is the ladder.

234

00:32:36.660 --> 00:32:40.470

Stefan Szepesi: or does it stand for? Where is the laundry?

235

00:32:41.800 --> 00:32:46.869

Stefan Szepesi: So I'm really curious. So this is a quiz type question that I have

236

00:32:47.770 --> 00:32:49.969

Stefan Szepesi: for the audience. Let's see. And I've

237

00:32:50.710 --> 00:32:56.340

Stefan Szepesi: through. AI. I made 3 pictures of Withdle in a forest setting.

238

00:32:57.275 --> 00:33:02.550

Stefan Szepesi: But only one is the right one. Let's see, we have a result.

239

00:33:03.626 --> 00:33:09.600

Stefan Szepesi: And I can happily say that the majority of you have the right answer.

240

00:33:09.700 --> 00:33:17.190

Stefan Szepesi: It is, it does not stand for where is the laundry, although I do think laundry has a certain.

241

00:33:17.530 --> 00:33:26.510

Stefan Szepesi: let's say, connotation, which you can use in negotiation. But in this, in this acronym it's not. It's not the one I. The word I need. Where is the language

242

00:33:26.690 --> 00:33:31.480

Stefan Szepesi: is extremely important. Question in negotiation, because how you frame

243

00:33:31.850 --> 00:33:38.420

Stefan Szepesi: questions and solutions and interest is extremely important whether you can get the dynamics constructive or not.

244

00:33:38.570 --> 00:33:43.429

Stefan Szepesi: So language, of course, is an important item in negotiation.

245

00:33:43.690 --> 00:33:46.710

Stefan Szepesi: but the acronym stands for where is the ladder.

246

00:33:47.360 --> 00:33:53.729

Stefan Szepesi: and where is the latter? Stands for a situation which is very relevant in politics and civil service.

247

00:33:53.900 --> 00:33:56.589

Stefan Szepesi: in which political leaders

248

00:33:56.750 --> 00:34:04.320

Stefan Szepesi: take on certain positions and shout them from very high in the tree, so they climb up very high in the tree

249

00:34:04.500 --> 00:34:15.449

Stefan Szepesi: about what should or should not be done. I will never accept this. This is my red line. It's not going to happen. You can count on me. This is the solution. We're going to have it

250

00:34:15.730 --> 00:34:24.879

Stefan Szepesi: right? So they take on very public positions at a very high level that people can see from all afar, because they're very high up in the tree

251

00:34:25.159 --> 00:34:27.020

Stefan Szepesi: in negotiation.

252

00:34:27.730 --> 00:34:35.209

Stefan Szepesi: One thing we have to do, as civil servants with one another at the negotiation table is, Find the ladder

253

00:34:35.550 --> 00:34:43.499

Stefan Szepesi: we have to find the ladder through which political leaders, directors, whoever has taken that position can climb down

254

00:34:43.940 --> 00:34:46.129

Stefan Szepesi: in a manner that saves face

255

00:34:46.270 --> 00:34:54.179

Stefan Szepesi: so that they don't fall from the branch of the tree and hurt themselves politically, but they can get down with decency

256

00:34:54.350 --> 00:34:57.480

Stefan Szepesi: with with respect.

257

00:34:57.600 --> 00:35:10.099

Stefan Szepesi: you know, and they can face their constituents in a respectful way. Sometimes we talk about the Victory Speech, they can give a victory speech, even if the result is, in fact contradictory to what they have said before.

258

00:35:10.680 --> 00:35:17.869

Stefan Szepesi: Okay, so that's something negotiators have to work on in order to serve their bosses right.

259

00:35:18.060 --> 00:35:20.229

Stefan Szepesi: Otherwise they won't get out of the tree.

260

00:35:21.716 --> 00:35:27.179

Stefan Szepesi: That's my fictitious story with fictitious AI pictures.

261

00:35:27.280 --> 00:35:29.999

Stefan Szepesi: and I'm going to give it back to you.

262

00:35:30.230 --> 00:35:33.249

Stefan Szepesi: Derek, to see I'm gonna stop sharing my screen

263

00:35:33.550 --> 00:35:36.700

Stefan Szepesi: to see whether there have been questions in the chat.

264

00:35:37.080 --> 00:35:39.200

Stefan Szepesi: or whether you have questions, Derek.

265

00:35:39.980 --> 00:35:56.670

Derek Alton: Yeah, no, thank you. 1st off. Thank you so much for that. I am ashamed to say that I think I got most of the poll questions wrong, which means clearly, I have lots yet to learn. Just want to remind everybody. Please put your questions into the Zoom. Q. And A. I know we've got a bunch here, and there's also a bunch that were pre-submitted.

266

00:35:56.670 --> 00:36:17.769

Derek Alton: While you're doing that, I want to sort of let you all know about a great free course we have available for you on negotiation skills for public servants. It's highly practical, skill-centered course that focuses on practical negotiation skills that you can develop in order to prepare for the kind of everyday negotiations that we all face in being public servants, but also in work and personal life.

267

00:36:17.770 --> 00:36:30.270

Derek Alton: It's self-paced, and will take you around 2 h to complete. And once again it's completely free. So go to the resource section of the webinar, or there's a link that just popped into the chat for my colleague. So you can check it out there.

268

00:36:30.470 --> 00:36:44.999

Derek Alton: Okay, so yes, we have a whole bunch of questions that came in. I think I'm going to start with one from Julie. That kind of goes back to something you talked about at the beginning, when you're answering the question of your most difficult

269

00:36:45.290 --> 00:36:46.930

Derek Alton: type of negotiation.

270

00:36:47.130 --> 00:37:13.189

Derek Alton: And so the question is in reference to you talked about this idea of delivering truth to power, and how that's really difficult. Given that, I think a lot of people would agree with you

that that's definitely something that's really challenging in that context. Is there a good approach you can take, particularly to make sure the person that receives that you're trying to negotiate with or receiving that negotiation from, you can see it as constructive and positive as possible.

271

00:37:14.630 --> 00:37:26.169

Stefan Szepesi: Right? Yeah, I think this is in itself speaking truth to power in civil service is in itself an interesting topic. For an hour. Webinar, let me just say a few things.

272

00:37:29.450 --> 00:37:32.419

Stefan Szepesi: I think truth to power situations.

273

00:37:33.050 --> 00:37:36.040

Stefan Szepesi: regardless of their urgency for society.

274

00:37:36.180 --> 00:37:38.989

Stefan Szepesi: In terms of that it should be said that it. You know that

275

00:37:39.200 --> 00:37:44.670

Stefan Szepesi: that things are perhaps on a going in an unacceptable direction, and you would expect civil servant to say something.

276

00:37:45.320 --> 00:37:53.379

Stefan Szepesi: are often treated as if I can get it off my chest. Only then I can look at myself in the mirror.

277

00:37:53.830 --> 00:37:56.590

Stefan Szepesi: you know, with with straight eyes.

278

00:37:56.780 --> 00:37:59.259

Stefan Szepesi: The next morning. I have to say something.

279

00:37:59.700 --> 00:38:12.830

Stefan Szepesi: and I can completely relate to that emotion because I had it myself working in the Middle East for the then this is a long time ago, when when things were also tough, but not not as tough as now, working for Tony Blair as an as an envoy.

280

00:38:13.439 --> 00:38:19.040

Stefan Szepesi: Really that feeling of I'm now gonna say what I think, because it should be said once.

281

00:38:19.350 --> 00:38:31.340

Stefan Szepesi: But you can already feel in that statement that you don't really believe yourself, it will make a difference. But you want to get it off your chest right? You want to speak to the boss and speak truth to power, and then it stops.

282

00:38:33.520 --> 00:38:36.270

Stefan Szepesi: I can completely sympathize with that.

283

00:38:36.950 --> 00:38:39.410

Stefan Szepesi: But I do not think it's enough.

284

00:38:40.280 --> 00:38:43.419

Stefan Szepesi: I think if you put on your negotiation spectacles.

285

00:38:43.710 --> 00:38:51.109

Stefan Szepesi: You're going to want to have an effect, an impact. You want to have influence right? And for that

286

00:38:52.560 --> 00:38:54.659

Stefan Szepesi: of course, every situation is different.

287

00:38:55.240 --> 00:39:01.649

Stefan Szepesi: but because there's a situation of balance, of power. The very 1st thing I think you have to look at is what's my alliance?

288

00:39:02.040 --> 00:39:17.849

Stefan Szepesi: Do other people agree with me in the Civil Service often. That's the case, if it's not the case. Good luck! Because if you're the only one thinking, you know it's the wrong direction, then perhaps you should find another job. But if many people think it's the right direction, then alliance formation is important. You have to do this together.

289

00:39:18.190 --> 00:39:22.630

Stefan Szepesi: and you are not perhaps, the best person to speak truth to power. So that's a good question.

290

00:39:22.780 --> 00:39:25.919

Stefan Szepesi: If you want to get it off your chest. It may feel right to you.

291

00:39:26.491 --> 00:39:31.758

Stefan Szepesi: But perhaps it's another person in the room that is a better messenger on it.

292

00:39:32.490 --> 00:39:41.640

Stefan Szepesi: so these are. These are 2 examples. The 3rd is, you have to sort of draw out

293

00:39:41.920 --> 00:39:47.329

Stefan Szepesi: your escalation ladder, because, speaking truth to power is the lowest

294

00:39:48.017 --> 00:39:56.609

Stefan Szepesi: step on the ladder. Right? I say, Derek, I really disagree with what you're about to decide. I know you're the boss, but I just want a moment of your time

295

00:39:56.760 --> 00:39:59.909

Stefan Szepesi: to to to tell you why you're wrong.

296

00:40:00.100 --> 00:40:03.320

Stefan Szepesi: and so you can consider it. That's the 1st step.

297

00:40:03.540 --> 00:40:07.689

Stefan Szepesi: Often people don't see any other step after that than resigning.

298

00:40:07.920 --> 00:40:09.190

Stefan Szepesi: That's also a problem.

299

00:40:09.350 --> 00:40:16.510

Stefan Szepesi: because in many institutions, of course, countries differ a lot from each other. You have certain ways of dealing with.

300

00:40:17.220 --> 00:40:25.829

Stefan Szepesi: you know, internal dispute, dialogue, mediation, and so on. So you have to really map out what's your stairs of escalation?

301

00:40:26.000 --> 00:40:31.049

Stefan Szepesi: If a simple conversation with Derek on you're the boss. But please listen to me. Doesn't work.

302

00:40:31.600 --> 00:40:42.759

Stefan Szepesi: So more preparation, more analysis on who who you speak to, what you want to get done, with whom you can get in your team and your alliance. I think that's a good start to

303

00:40:42.910 --> 00:40:50.100

Stefan Szepesi: think about speaking truth to power in a in a negotiation way rather than in a. I want to get it off my chest way, and then it's gone.

304

00:40:52.250 --> 00:41:09.050

Derek Alton: So a whole bunch of questions here. I'm trying to like lump a bunch of them together here. But a question that I know for me is or hits close to home. A bit is when you're in a negotiations situation oftentimes different parties. Some are more hardline and locked into their positions, and others.

305

00:41:09.050 --> 00:41:09.439

Stefan Szepesi: There's it!

306

00:41:09.440 --> 00:41:37.580

Derek Alton: More elastic and mobile, and the danger in that situation is that the people who are more entrenched in those positions are more likely to get their, or could more likely get their way, which then incentivizes people to be more sort of hardline their position. And if you're really elastic in your position, you can get really just rolled over in the negotiation process. So as a negotiator in that context, how do you balance that hardline versus elastic and making sure that you get to the best result at the end.

307

00:41:38.810 --> 00:41:44.189

Stefan Szepesi: Yeah, it's a very good question. Usually, the higher up you get

308

00:41:44.350 --> 00:41:51.360

Stefan Szepesi: the more hard line everybody gets, particularly when they're experienced negotiators.

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00:41:51.981 --> 00:42:03.979

Stefan Szepesi: And if there's no huge power, differential people tend to copy one another's behavior. So, but in a, in a, in a situation of power imbalance

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00:42:04.290 --> 00:42:17.870

Stefan Szepesi: you often that's more difficult. You have parties that really need an agreement that are almost desperate for an agreement, and then you have parties who have a good alternative. And who can say, well, you know, if you get sick and you die, it's your problem.

311

00:42:18.010 --> 00:42:21.510

Stefan Szepesi: As long as it doesn't go my way I won't sign.

312

00:42:23.710 --> 00:42:36.679

Stefan Szepesi: I think. As a so, there's 2 perspectives. One is the perspective of the facilitator, the neutral party, the other one is the perspective of the parties themselves. As a facilitator, I think

313

00:42:37.380 --> 00:42:43.289

Stefan Szepesi: digging down to interest is a really useful way to soften positions.

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00:42:43.870 --> 00:42:49.419

Stefan Szepesi: but also agreeing up front about the process

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00:42:49.530 --> 00:43:01.289

Stefan Szepesi: and about the intentions of party to really get to agreement and to spend a lot of time sort of on the rules of engagement really helps. It's no ironclad guarantee, but it really helps, because then, as a facilitator.

316

00:43:01.420 --> 00:43:04.110

Stefan Szepesi: you can intervene and say.

317

00:43:04.230 --> 00:43:16.120

Stefan Szepesi: Derek, you've made the same statement for 10 times now on what you want, and that you won't budge. We've heard you. It's very clear I've asked you a couple of questions on why you want that.

318

00:43:16.270 --> 00:43:32.440

Stefan Szepesi: but you haven't answered those, and I do think, in due process and in line with our rules of engagement. You're supposed to explain to us. You know, what is behind this this position. So you you really try through the rules to move people. That's from a facilitator's perspective.

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00:43:32.890 --> 00:43:36.739

Stefan Szepesi: from the perspective of the weaker party. Again, alliances are key.

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00:43:37.050 --> 00:43:50.390

Stefan Szepesi: If you don't work out on your alternatives, or you don't improve the alternative that you have away from the table, you have to form an alliance with other parties. Otherwise, if you're sitting opposed, Machiavelli, you don't have a chance.

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00:43:50.540 --> 00:43:57.279

Stefan Szepesi: you know, so that will be my 1st off the cuff advice. If you're in a position of low power.

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00:43:57.940 --> 00:43:58.490

Stefan Szepesi: Okay?

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00:43:58.490 --> 00:44:05.940

Derek Alton: So another couple questions. I'm going to kind of lump together. I think that kind of build off of this conversation. One is this whole thing around emotions.

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00:44:06.050 --> 00:44:17.049

Derek Alton: and how you create space for emotions, both your own emotions. But other people's emotions within a negotiation position, because that can both walk in positions, but also can.

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00:44:17.240 --> 00:44:41.119

Derek Alton: It is such an important element to any negotiation, but also really hard to work with and manage. So any advice you have on that. And another piece. I want to add into that. That, I think, is somewhat related to this idea of safety and risk, and balancing those things like, how much risk are people willing to take? This idea of bringing forward interest that you talked about earlier implies a certain level of risk and safety? So

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00:44:41.120 --> 00:44:48.149

Derek Alton: so both the emotions. And then how do you also, at the same time creating the space for safety and understanding risk in that context?

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00:44:48.910 --> 00:45:00.350

Stefan Szepesi: Yes. Well, this this principle I I put in one of the polls people before problems. William Uri, in the founding book on negotiation, getting to yes.

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00:45:00.680 --> 00:45:07.239

Stefan Szepesi: phrased it differently as separating people from the problem. But it really means the same.

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00:45:07.760 --> 00:45:11.460

Stefan Szepesi: Don't let the substance run through the relationship.

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00:45:11.670 --> 00:45:20.520

Stefan Szepesi: separate them, give them both the attention they deserve, but keep them separate, not just for the other person, but also for yourself.

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00:45:20.840 --> 00:45:35.919

Stefan Szepesi: So if we say people before problems, we also say ourselves before the substance, we can feel very fatigued emotionally. We can feel angry. We can feel anxiety.

332

00:45:37.650 --> 00:45:52.310

Stefan Szepesi: if we're not able to manage that then these emotions will manage us, and it won't work into our favor in terms of the result we're going to get so managing. Your, you know. Sort of fire is a

333

00:45:52.820 --> 00:45:55.325

Stefan Szepesi: is is a great servant, but

334

00:45:56.550 --> 00:46:15.679

Stefan Szepesi: A bad master. So you let the emotions not take control of you, but you try to use your emotions if I'm very angry or upset or disappointed by what happened yesterday, because you, Derek, went to the press, although we had agreed we wouldn't speak to the press until the process was over. I can keep that inside

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00:46:16.320 --> 00:46:19.469

Stefan Szepesi: and just look at you angrily throughout the negotiation.

336

00:46:20.200 --> 00:46:24.589

Stefan Szepesi: or I can put people myself before the problem and actually start with this.

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00:46:24.770 --> 00:46:29.329

Stefan Szepesi: you know, to get it off my chest and actually say that I really don't like that. And in fact, Derek.

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00:46:29.580 --> 00:46:32.320

Stefan Szepesi: I think an apology is legitimate, given what we've

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00:46:32.580 --> 00:46:39.250

Stefan Szepesi: agreed on before. Right? So that's that's 1 way to prioritize your own values.

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00:46:39.490 --> 00:46:45.000

Stefan Szepesi: And at the same time make sure it's at least off your chest. Maybe Derek is not going to apologize, but at least

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00:46:45.510 --> 00:46:54.550

Stefan Szepesi: I've I've given way to an emotion I felt, and I can say that which allows me to more rationally look at the substance later on in negotiation.

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00:46:56.460 --> 00:47:05.650

Stefan Szepesi: often people hold back on this because they find it unprofessional. I find it very professional. If you actually do this the same for others. If others have strong emotions, and you do not

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00:47:06.320 --> 00:47:08.570

Stefan Szepesi: allow those emotions to be there

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00:47:08.860 --> 00:47:15.969

Stefan Szepesi: and recognize that they are there, because by recognizing it, you are not yet agreeing with the substance of the person. But you're saying.

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00:47:16.500 --> 00:47:25.760

Stefan Szepesi: Derek. I could see it in the way you look the your your nonverbal behavior. You're obviously very upset and just, you know.

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00:47:25.950 --> 00:47:30.450

Stefan Szepesi: and I'm just wonder why? Because I thought things were going so extremely well. So just tell me

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00:47:30.700 --> 00:47:40.609

Stefan Szepesi: it really helps to set the stage for the substance, you know, rather than trying to work through the substance while it's clearly visible. Derek is very angry at us.

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00:47:42.840 --> 00:47:47.929

Derek Alton: Thank you. I like that and apologies about the media. It was a mistake. I didn't mean to send that message signal chat.

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00:47:48.700 --> 00:47:55.710

Derek Alton: It happens? Question for you. You talk about finding the ladder really simple. Question, how do you find the ladder?

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00:47:56.800 --> 00:47:57.310

Stefan Szepesi: Right.

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00:47:58.150 --> 00:48:06.120

Stefan Szepesi: You can find the letter by putting on the table. And this is sensitive, this, this is really a question of timing

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00:48:06.500 --> 00:48:08.609

Stefan Szepesi: that the bosses have a problem

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00:48:10.140 --> 00:48:20.680

Stefan Szepesi: that we agree. As for, let's say, top senior advisors, that this would be a reasonable solution better than the alternative. So this would be reasonable to to work out in more detail, for example.

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00:48:21.480 --> 00:48:30.409

Stefan Szepesi: but 2 of the 4 bosses have a problem because they've said something publicly very different, you know, to their members, to their constituents, to the media, whoever.

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00:48:31.270 --> 00:48:55.959

Stefan Szepesi: And then it's really interesting. Because then what you want to create is a situation in which the 4 parties in this, in this fictitious example, look at the problem together, and find the ladder. So, in other words, what is the framing of this solution, which allows a decent and respectful, gracious descent from that high top top branch in the tree.

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00:48:56.110 --> 00:49:04.979

Stefan Szepesi: What's the latter? So the latter is often language. The latter is communication. The latter is timing, and the latter is a very good internal briefing.

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00:49:05.720 --> 00:49:22.880

Stefan Szepesi: You know a lot of negotiations go wrong because the bosses aren't properly briefed, or they don't have patience for the briefing that the Sherpas give them. So it's a lot of different things. But my most important point would be that you have to find that ladder together as parties.

358

00:49:23.370 --> 00:49:27.900

Stefan Szepesi: And let's say I have this problem, and Derek hasn't.

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00:49:28.490 --> 00:49:49.889

Stefan Szepesi: It's not gonna help Derek. If he says, Stefan, it's your boss. You find the ladder. Sort it out. It's your problem. No, it's our problem, because if my boss doesn't have the ladder, he won't come down, and then you, Derek, do not have an agreement. So you you have to construct a situation, a timing in which the the 4 of these folks can say, Okay.

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00:49:50.430 --> 00:50:04.169

Stefan Szepesi: how can we let the governor, for example, say that the company will stay, and he's extremely happy, while at the same time admitting that 80% of the jobs will go right. That's difficult. But there is a message around messaging around that.

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00:50:04.880 --> 00:50:11.979

Derek Alton: So a question. And it's a question from Rifayat that I think plays is a good follow-up to what you just said.

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00:50:12.460 --> 00:50:16.769

Derek Alton: I think you laid out makes sense when everybody's sort of negotiating in good faith.

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00:50:16.990 --> 00:50:32.749

Derek Alton: But what if that's not the case? Or what if there is concern that that's not the case. What do you do if you have one or a couple of different members of the negotiation? Not necessarily like negotiating in bad faith? How do you manage that situation both as a facilitator, but then also as a participant.

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00:50:34.110 --> 00:50:39.670

Stefan Szepesi: Yeah, you'd you'd like to. I in an ideal situation.

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00:50:42.890 --> 00:50:44.340

Stefan Szepesi: You

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00:50:44.460 --> 00:50:58.140

Stefan Szepesi: make sure you can walk away from the table. So you have a button on alternative that is reasonable, that will allow you to, you know. Keep living, keep up your living standards as they are, or keep up whatever it is that you are negotiating.

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00:50:58.140 --> 00:51:00.180

Derek Alton: Can can you show you quickly? Is.

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00:51:00.180 --> 00:51:14.110

Stefan Szepesi: Yeah, but so important, indeed, Patna is your best alternative to a negotiated agreement. In other words, what do you have when the negotiation fails. You want to make sure that what you have when it fails is good enough.

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00:51:14.840 --> 00:51:23.270

Stefan Szepesi: Unfortunately, we are sometimes in situations where what we have when the negotiation fields is pretty damn bad, and

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00:51:23.390 --> 00:51:27.500

Stefan Szepesi: if then, we are confronted with a party that negotiates in bad faith,

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00:51:30.340 --> 00:51:41.809

Stefan Szepesi: we'd have to address it. You know the the 1st thing you do with bad faith, with, let's say, signals of bad faith is discussing, it is, is pausing the substance and saying.

372

00:51:41.940 --> 00:52:08.210

Stefan Szepesi: You know, yesterday you said this. Now you say that, are you actually interested in getting an agreement at all? You want to sort of call out the spoilers, so to say, because bad faith negotiators often have difficulty, truly admitting that. Yes, I'm negotiating in bad faith that hardly ever happens right? So that's I think, your 1st line of response.

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00:52:08.400 --> 00:52:11.900

Stefan Szepesi: but eventually you may have to draw a line. If if

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00:52:12.410 --> 00:52:28.549

Stefan Szepesi: if you feel you are toyed with you, better draw the line early, because it's in little things. If if other parties play with you on the little things on the agenda, not sharing information on doing things, it doesn't actually ruin the negotiation. But just feel unice.

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00:52:28.800 --> 00:52:36.329

Stefan Szepesi: The earlier you draw the line, including when you're a weaker party, the more preventive it is for the bigger stuff later on.

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00:52:36.580 --> 00:52:39.469

Stefan Szepesi: So don't you know? Don't let them play with you.

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00:52:42.060 --> 00:52:46.240

Derek Alton: So so I'm just going through so many questions here

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00:52:47.000 --> 00:52:51.360

Stefan Szepesi: I see I'm not looking at him. I'm just trusting you. There's too many. So.

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00:52:51.360 --> 00:52:52.729

Derek Alton: 1st mistake right there.

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00:52:52.730 --> 00:52:54.340

Stefan Szepesi: 2 things at one time.

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00:52:54.598 --> 00:53:11.150

Derek Alton: Well, here's a good one from Kelly, and there's actually a couple people who have asked similar questions around, sort of your own personal experience in your life with this in particular. Kelly wants to know if you've had any times when you got stumped on real situations. And then how did you like are stuck? And then how did you overcome that experience?

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00:53:13.370 --> 00:53:19.269

Stefan Szepesi: Yeah, I I think people often talk about getting stuck as if it's something that's that's bad.

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00:53:19.670 --> 00:53:23.030

Stefan Szepesi: I think it's rather neutral, I think, getting stuck

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00:53:23.598 --> 00:53:30.210

Stefan Szepesi: in stalemate, for example, where there's the word people often use is actually super interesting.

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00:53:31.344 --> 00:53:38.959

Stefan Szepesi: And the you know, the I think the 1st thing you do is pause because you recognize there's a stalemate. We can't make progress now

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00:53:39.190 --> 00:53:44.670

Stefan Szepesi: and then. If it's a large group, or is it? Let's say, if it's more than 2 parties, if it's a multiple party situation.

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00:53:44.830 --> 00:53:51.000

Stefan Szepesi: you start bilaterally discussing more on the Meta level, why, you're stuck.

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00:53:51.600 --> 00:53:58.029

Stefan Szepesi: What is it? Is it the personal relationship between the folks in the room could be? That's something you can address.

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00:53:58.290 --> 00:54:01.200

Stefan Szepesi: Is it disagreement on the facts?

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00:54:01.330 --> 00:54:17.330

Stefan Szepesi: Is it that at the start of the process. We haven't really, you know, wrote down the constitution of this process with, for example, rules on communication to our constituents or the media, or whatever is that preventing us from really making steps here?

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00:54:17.600 --> 00:54:24.340

Stefan Szepesi: Is it the changing world context that we're in that makes it extremely hard for a few of these parties to actually commit.

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00:54:24.720 --> 00:54:36.149

Stefan Szepesi: You want to do sort of an analysis, but it's hard to do it in the room. So what you often do is there's a stalemate. You pause, you know you stop for a few weeks, or a few days, or whatever whatever you can afford.

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00:54:36.700 --> 00:54:41.450

Stefan Szepesi: and you actually discuss. You do a joint analysis on why, you're stuck.

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00:54:41.950 --> 00:54:47.519

Stefan Szepesi: That really. Yeah, that can help to find the levers to unstuck it.

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00:54:49.380 --> 00:54:53.100

Derek Alton: That makes me feel a bit better, because I feel stuck all the time. So it's good to know it's part of the process.

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00:54:53.100 --> 00:54:55.769

Stefan Szepesi: Oh, stock is okay. Yeah, stuck is interesting.

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00:54:55.903 --> 00:54:56.169

Stefan Szepesi: You, too.

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00:54:56.170 --> 00:54:57.750

Stefan Szepesi: So duck is fascinating.

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00:54:57.750 --> 00:55:03.179

Derek Alton: I'm going to try squeezing one more question here before we run out of time. And this one's from Lucy.

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00:55:03.550 --> 00:55:12.999

Derek Alton: So the question is, how did you become so good at negotiating? Is it? Did you do some specific training, or just come through it through experience to your job like, what was it that helped you get to where you are now?

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00:55:14.456 --> 00:55:18.970

Stefan Szepesi: I'm not sure I'm a student of negotiation. Yes, it's true. I

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00:55:19.170 --> 00:55:21.887

Stefan Szepesi: I train a lot of folks.

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00:55:23.246 --> 00:55:27.230

Stefan Szepesi: But I really consider myself a student.

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00:55:27.570 --> 00:55:35.540

Stefan Szepesi: and and and I will never take off that hat because it's a fascinating

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00:55:36.130 --> 00:55:41.250

Stefan Szepesi: you know, it's such a fascinating part of our daily live in our daily professional practice.

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00:55:41.887 --> 00:55:44.910

Stefan Szepesi: And there is still a lot of unknowns.

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00:55:45.290 --> 00:55:49.030

Stefan Szepesi: So I think if you have that attitude

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00:55:49.140 --> 00:55:53.880

Stefan Szepesi: you can become much better than however good you are now.

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00:55:56.630 --> 00:56:06.549

Stefan Szepesi: you know, you start listening to podcasts, you start reading books, you start following training courses in my particular case. I followed training courses at the Harvard program on negotiation.

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00:56:06.930 --> 00:56:18.389

Stefan Szepesi: but it doesn't have to have the name Harvard in it to be of high quality. So I would certainly say, if this, if this is interesting, start following your ecourse at apolitical, and then perhaps look for

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00:56:19.121 --> 00:56:28.590

Stefan Szepesi: training online or or in company or or or it's it's it's a fantastic world. And the the funny thing is that

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00:56:29.140 --> 00:56:37.819

Stefan Szepesi: many of the students in my trainings they say the biggest impact has been on their personal lives, although their their employer has paid for it.

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00:56:38.261 --> 00:56:43.390

Stefan Szepesi: But it so it does. It does give you a different perspective on the world if you

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00:56:43.600 --> 00:56:49.529

Stefan Szepesi: learn to make a few steps on your your personal skills, but also your knowledge how to analyze a negotiation.

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00:56:49.780 --> 00:56:54.150

Stefan Szepesi: because that that is something, I think, in public service we can do much better. We can serve our

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00:56:54.450 --> 00:57:08.840

Stefan Szepesi: our bosses, whether Director Ceos or or political decision makers. We can serve them by giving them better negotiating briefings, you know, so they're better able to to protect their interest in negotiation with other big bosses.

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00:57:10.170 --> 00:57:19.620

Derek Alton: Amazing. Well, we're we're basically at time now. So 1st off. Thank you, Stefan, so much for everything you've shared so virtual round of applause.

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00:57:19.620 --> 00:57:19.990

Stefan Szepesi: Thank you.

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00:57:19.990 --> 00:57:44.980

Derek Alton: This has been really enjoyable and hugely informative, and most importantly, thank you to everyone who attended and invested so much of your time to learn and to join us here today. And for all your questions, I know we didn't get to many of it. We have a quick poll that we want to put out there our last one. So just about your experience today, and how much value you felt you got from today's conversations. So whilst you're responding. I want to reiterate that this isn't the end. This is the beginning of the conversation.

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00:57:44.980 --> 00:57:57.119

Derek Alton: So keep sharing your ideas and challenges and questions like I said. There's lots of questions we can get to put those questions in the system, thinking community, Stefan, hopefully, I can get you to join us there and answer some questions in the system, thinking community.

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00:57:57.120 --> 00:58:02.550

Stefan Szepesi: For sure, for sure. Happy to follow up later. I see a lot of questions that I haven't been able to read properly.

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00:58:02.550 --> 00:58:03.000

Derek Alton: Many questions.

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00:58:03.000 --> 00:58:04.080

Stefan Szepesi: Send to them afterwards.

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00:58:04.080 --> 00:58:29.019

Derek Alton: So again, special. Thank you to again a good excuse. Join the systems, thinking community. Stefan will be there. I'll be there. Ask more of your questions, a special thank you. To everyone who's attended today, we're giving you all access to one of our most popular negotiation resources. The guide on 4 ways to improve your negotiation skills in the public sector, to claim your checklist, go to the systems, thinking

425

00:58:29.020 --> 00:58:36.049

Derek Alton: another excuse to go there and leave a comment on the post pinned at the top of the page. We'll send you a link after the event.

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00:58:36.050 --> 00:58:55.509

Derek Alton: Okay, so that is it. That's all the time we have for today. We hope you found it helpful. And we want to say a huge thank you once again to everyone who made today happen and thank you for taking time out of your busy day. Keep an eye out for an email coming your way with today's recordings and resources. And we hope to see you at another apolitical event very soon. Thank you again, Stefan.

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00:58:55.510 --> 00:58:57.359

Stefan Szepesi: Thank you, Derek. Thanks everyone.

428

00:58:57.360 --> 00:58:59.020

Derek Alton: Okay, cheers. Everyone.