



LEARN TO TEMPER ANGER DURING TALKS

LATZ
NEGOTIATION

By Marty Latz

“On several occasions I got so angry at the other side’s actions that I wrote a nasty e-mail and shot it off. Fortunately, it didn’t destroy the negotiations. But I’m worried my temper will cause bigger problems next time. What should I do?”

This comment, from a highly successful chief executive, hits a chord in many of my clients. For who hasn’t sent an email in the heat of the moment we wish we could retract?

What should we do?

Take a Break

In his groundbreaking book “Emotional Intelligence,” Daniel Goleman writes that “cooling off physiologically by waiting out the adrenal surge (caused by anger)” is one way to de-escalate anger and its negative impact. Bottom line: Take a break.

But don’t just take a break and stew over the issue. That’s counterproductive. Instead, Goleman recommends you do something pleasurable that will distract you from the issue, like take a walk. You might also write that nasty reply email but then park it in your draft folder and not send it until you can more reasonably evaluate what to do.

By the way, some believe venting anger is helpful, at least to the person feeling it. Goleman found this contrary to the research, noting that “ventilating anger is one of the worst ways” to deal with it, as it simply leads to escalation and more anger. Instead, he suggests, cool down first.

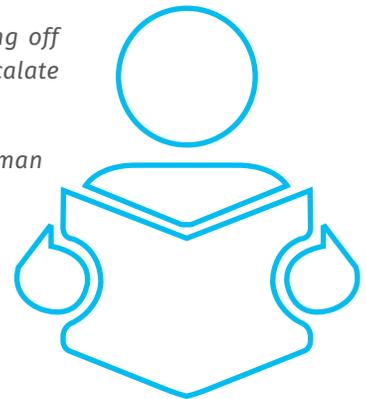
Examine the Cause of Your Feeling

Why do you feel angry? Is it because your counterpart:

- lied;
- responded to your reasonable offer with a super aggressive counter; and/or
- engaged in unethical negotiation games, like nibbling at the end (asking for more when you already had a deal)?

The list of possible causes is endless. All, however, share one common element: They relate to actions taken by your counterpart. So, examine what your counterpart might have been trying to accomplish with those actions.

Was he or she trying to push your button so you would react out of anger? Perhaps cultural differences played a role, and it was a misunderstanding. Or maybe your counterpart lied about a previous commitment because his or her leverage had weakened since that commitment and it would be extremely expensive for them to fulfill it.



Whatever the reason, figure it out if you can. Only then can you determine how best to respond.

Strategically Respond

Of course, your possible strategic responses are also numerous depending on what your counterpart was doing and trying to accomplish. But always evaluate whether and how to incorporate these elements into your response:

- Information-gathering about the action; perhaps call them up, share your feeling and reaction and explore why it happened;
- Objective criteria or standards, like market value, as these can often depersonalize the environment; and
- Leverage, especially your Plan B if your deal (Plan A) doesn't move forward.

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ABC News Anchor George Stephanopoulos has called Marty Latz “one of the most accomplished and persuasive negotiators I know.” As the founder of LATZ Negotiation, Marty has trained over 100,000 business professionals and attorneys from around the world, how to more effectively and successfully negotiate.

Latz is the author of *Gain the Edge! How to Negotiate to Get What You Want*, and has appeared as a negotiation expert on CBS, CNN, and Fox News. Latz also negotiated for The White House nationally and internationally on The White House Advance Teams. He also has written a monthly negotiation column for various newspapers since 1999.

Latz received his law and negotiation training from Harvard Law School, where he graduated *cum laude*.

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